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BLACKWOOD'S
Edinburgh
MAGAZINE.

VOL. CLXXII.

JULY—DECEMBER 1902.



NEW YORK :
THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLICATION CO.,
7 AND 9 WARREN STREET.

Publishers of
NINETEENTH CENTURY, CONTEMPORARY REVIEW, WESTMINSTER REVIEW,
FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW, BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE,
QUARTERLY AND EDINBURGH REVIEWS.

1902.

BLACKWOOD'S
EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXLL

JULY 1902.

VOL. CLXXII.

THE END OF THE TETHER.¹

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

I.

FOR a long time after the course of the steamer *Sofala* had been altered for the land, the low swampy coast had retained its appearance of a mere smudge of darkness beyond a belt of glitter. The sunrays seemed to fall violently upon the calm sea—seemed to shatter themselves upon an adamant surface into sparkling dust, into a dazzling vapour of light that blinded the eye and wearied the brain with its unsteady brightness.

Captain Whalley did not look at it. When his *Serang*, approaching the roomy cane arm-chair which he filled capably, had informed him in a low voice that the course was

to be altered, he had risen at once and had remained on his feet, face forward, while the head of his ship swung through a quarter of a circle. He had not uttered a single word, not even the word to steady the helm. It was the *Serang*, an elderly, alert, little Malay, with a very dark skin, who murmured the order to the helmsman. And then Captain Whalley slowly sat down again in the arm-chair on the bridge and fixed his eyes on the deck between his feet.

He could not hope to see anything new upon this lane of the sea. He had been on these coasts for the last three years. From Low Cape to

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Malantan the distance was fifty miles, six hours' steaming for the old ship with the tide, or seven against. Then you steered straight for the land, and by-and-by three palms would appear on the sky, tall and slim, and with their dishevelled heads in a bunch, as if in confidential criticism of the dark mangroves. The *Sofala* would be headed towards them; a few insignificant little islets would come detached from the dull green coast, which at a given moment, as the ship closed with it obliquely, would show several clean shining fractures—the brimful estuary of a river. Then on through a brown liquid, three parts water and one part black earth, on and on between the low shores, three parts black earth and one part brackish water, the *Sofala* would plough her way up-stream, as she had done once every month for these seven years or more, long before he was aware of her existence, long before he had ever thought of having anything to do with her and her invariable voyages. The old ship ought to have known the road better than her men, who had not been kept so long at it without a change; better than the faithful Serang, whom he had brought over from his last ship to keep the captain's watch; better than he himself, who had been her captain for the last three years only. She could always be depended upon to make her courses. Her compasses were never out. She was no trouble at all to take about, as if her great age had given her knowledge, wisdom,

and steadiness. She made her landfalls to a degree of the bearing, and almost to a minute of her allowed time. At any moment, as he sat on the bridge without looking up, or lay sleepless in his bed, simply by reckoning the days and the hours he could tell where he was—the precise spot of the beat. He knew it well too, this monotonous huckster's round, up and down the Straits; he knew its order and its sights and its people. Malacca to begin with, in at daylight and out at dusk, to cross over with a rigid phosphorescent wake this highway of the Far East. Darkness and gleams on the water, clear stars on a black sky, perhaps the lights of a home steamer keeping her unswerving course in the middle, or maybe the elusive shadow of a native craft with her mat sails flitting by silently—and the low land on the other side in sight at daylight. At noon the three palms of the next place of call, a settlement up a sluggish river. The principal white trader residing there was a retired young sailor, with whom he had become friendly in the course of many voyages. Sixty miles farther on there was another place of call, a deep bay with only a couple of houses on the beach. And so on, in and out, picking up coastwise cargo here and there, and finishing with a hundred miles' steady steaming through the maze of an archipelago of small islands up to a large native town at the end of the beat. There was a three days' rest for the old ship before he started her again in inverse order, seeing the same

shores from another bearing, hearing the same voices in the same places, back again to the *Sofala's* port of registry on the great highway to the East, where he would take up a berth nearly opposite the big stone pile of the harbour office till it was time to start again on the old round of 800 miles and thirty days. Not a very enterprising life, this, for Captain Whalley, Henry Whalley, otherwise Daredevil Harry—Whalley of the *Condor*, a famous clipper in her day. No. Not a very enterprising life for a man who had served famous firms, who had sailed famous ships (more than one or two of them his own); who had made famous passages, had been the pioneer of new routes and new trades; who had steered across the unsurveyed tracts of the South Seas, and had seen the sun rise on uncharted islands. Fifty years at sea, and forty out in the East ("a pretty thorough apprenticeship," he used to remark smilingly), had made him honourably known to a generation of shipowners and merchants in all the ports from Bombay clear over to where the East merges into the West upon the coast of the two Americas. His fame remained writ, not very large but plain enough, on the Admiralty charts. Was there not somewhere between Australia and China a Whalley Island and a Condor Reef? On that dangerous coral formation the celebrated clipper had hung stranded for three days, her captain and crew throwing her cargo overboard with one hand and with the other, as it were,

keeping off her a flotilla of savage war-canoes. At that time neither the island nor the rock had any official existence. Later the officers of her Majesty's steam-vessel *Fusilier*, despatched to make a survey of the route, recognised in the adoption of these two names the enterprise of the man and the solidity of the ship. Besides, as any one who cares may see, the 'General Directory,' vol. ii. p. 410, begins the description of the "Malotu or Whalley Passage" with the words: "This advantageous route, first discovered in 1850 by Captain Whalley in the ship *Condor*," &c., and ends by recommending it warmly to sailing vessels leaving the China ports for the south in the months from December to April inclusive.

This was the clearest gain he had out of life. Nothing could rob him of this kind of fame. The piercing of the Isthmus of Suez, like the breaking of a dam, had let in upon the East a flood of new ships, new men, new methods of trade. It had changed the face of the Eastern seas and the very spirit of their life; so that his early experiences meant nothing whatever to the new generation of seamen.

In those bygone days he had handled many thousands of pounds of his employers' money and of his own; he had attended faithfully, as by law a shipmaster is expected to do, to the conflicting interests of owners, charterers, and underwriters. He had never lost a ship or consented to a shady transaction; and he had lasted

well, outlasting in the end the conditions that had gone to the making of his name. He had buried his wife (in the Gulf of Petchili), had married off his daughter to the man of her unlucky choice, and had lost more

than an ample competence in the crash of the notorious Travancore and Deccan Banking Corporation, whose downfall had shaken the East like an earthquake. And he was sixty-five years old.

II.

His age sat lightly enough on him; and of his ruin he was not ashamed. He had not been alone to believe in the stability of the Banking Corporation. Men whose judgment in matters of finance was as expert as his seamanship had commended the prudence of his investments, and had lost themselves much money in the great failure. The only difference between him and them was that he had lost his all. And yet not his all. There had remained to him from his lost fortune a very pretty little barque, *Fair Maid*, which he had bought to occupy his leisure of a retired sailor—"to play with," as he expressed it himself.

He had officially left the sea the year preceding his daughter's marriage. But after the young couple had gone to settle in Melbourne he felt he could not make himself happy on shore. He was too much of a merchant sea-captain for mere yachting to satisfy him. He wanted the illusion of affairs; and his acquisition of the *Fair Maid* preserved the continuity of his life. He introduced her to his acquaintances in various ports as "my last command." When he grew too old to be trusted with a ship, he would

lay her up and go ashore to be buried, leaving directions in his will to have the barque towed out and scuttled decently in deep water on the day of the funeral. His daughter would not grudge him the satisfaction of knowing that no stranger would handle his last command after him. With the fortune he was able to leave her, the value of a 500-ton barque was neither here nor there. All this would be said with a jocular twinkle in his eye: the vigorous old man had too much vitality for the sentimentalism of regret; and a little wistfully withal, because he was at home in life, taking a genuine pleasure in its feelings and its possessions; in the dignity of his reputation and his wealth, in his love for his daughter, and in his satisfaction with the ship—the plaything of his lonely leisure.

He had the cabin arranged in accordance with his simple ideal of comfort at sea. A big bookcase (he was a great reader) occupied one side of his stateroom; the portrait of his late wife, a flat bituminous oil-painting representing the profile and one long black ringlet of a young woman, faced his bedplace. Three chronometers ticked him to sleep and greeted

him on waking with the tiny competition of their beats. He rose at five every day. The officer of the morning watch, drinking his early cup of coffee aft by the wheel, heard through the wide orifice of the copper ventilators all the splashing, blowings, and splutterings of his captain's toilet. These noises would be followed by a sustained deep murmur of the Lord's Prayer recited in a loud earnest voice. Five minutes afterwards the head and shoulders of Captain Whalley emerged out of the companion hatchway. Invariably he paused for a while on the stairs, looking all round at the horizon; upwards at the trim of the sails; inhaling deep draughts of the fresh air. Only then he would step out on the poop, acknowledging the hand raised to the peak of the cap with a majestic and benign "Good morning to you." He walked the deck till eight scrupulously. Sometimes, not above twice a-year, he had to use a thick cudgel-like stick on account of a stiffness in the hip—a slight touch of rheumatism, he supposed. Otherwise he knew nothing of the ills of the flesh. At the ringing of the breakfast bell he went below to feed his canaries, wind up the chronometers, and take the head of the table. From there he had before his eyes the big carbon photographs of his daughter, her husband, and two fat-legged babies—his grandchildren—set in black frames into the maple-wood bulkheads of the cuddy. After breakfast he dusted the glass over these portraits him-

self with a cloth, and brushed the oil painting of his wife with a plummet kept suspended from a small brass hook by the side of the heavy gold frame. Then with the door of his state-room shut, he would sit down on the couch under the portrait to read a chapter out of a thick pocket Bible—her Bible. But there were days when he only sat there for half an hour with his finger between the leaves and the closed book resting on his knees. Perhaps he had remembered suddenly how fond of boat-sailing she used to be.

She had been a real shipmate and a true woman too. You could find no brighter, cheerier home afloat than under the poop-deck of the *Condor*, with the big main cabin all white and gold, garlanded as if for a perpetual festival with an unfading wreath. She had decorated the centre of every panel with a cluster of home flowers. It took her a twelvemonth to go round the cuddy with this labour of love. To him it had remained a marvel of painting, the highest achievement of taste and skill; and as to old Swinburne, his mate, every time he came down to his meals he stood transfixed with admiration before the progress of the work. You could almost smell these roses, he declared, sniffing the faint flavour of turpentine which at that time pervaded the saloon, and (as he confessed afterwards) made him somewhat less hearty than usual in tackling his food. But there was nothing of the sort to interfere with his enjoyment of her singing. "Mrs

Whalley is a regular out-and-out nightingale, sir," he would pronounce with a judicial air after listening profoundly over the skylight to the very end of the piece. In fine weather, in the second dog-watch, the two men could hear her trills and roulades going on to the accompaniment of the piano in the cabin. On the very day they got engaged he had written to London for that instrument; but they had been married for over a year before it reached them, coming out round the Cape. The big case made part of the first direct general cargo landed in Hongkong harbour—an event that to the men who walked the busy quays of to-day seemed as hazily remote as the dark ages of history. But Captain Whalley could in a half hour of solitude live again all his life, with its romance, its idyl, and its sorrow. He had to close her eyes himself. She went away from under the ensign like a sailor's wife, a sailor herself at heart. He had read the service over her, out of her own prayer-book, without a break in his voice. When he lifted his eyes he could see old Swinburne facing him with his cap pressed to his breast, and his rugged, weather-beaten, impassive face streaming with drops of water like a lump of chipped red granite in a shower. It was all very well for that old sea-dog to cry. He had to read on to the end; but after the splash he did not remember much of what happened for the next few days. An elderly sailor of the crew, deft at needlework, put together a

mourning frock for the child out of one of her black skirts.

He was not likely to forget; but you cannot dam up life like a sluggish stream. It will break out and flow over a man's troubles, it will close upon a sorrow like the sea upon a dead body, no matter how much love has gone to the bottom. And the world is not bad. People had been very kind to him; especially Mrs Gardner, the wife of the senior partner in Gardner, Patteson, & Co., the owners of the *Condor*. It was she who volunteered to look after the little one, and in due course took her to England (something of a journey in those days, even by the overland mail route) with her own girls to finish her education. It was ten years before he saw her again.

As a little child she had never been frightened of bad weather; she would beg to be taken up on deck in the bosom of his oilskin coat to watch the big seas hurling themselves upon the *Condor*. The swirl and crash of the waves seemed to fill her small soul with breathless delight. "A good boy spoiled," he used to say of her in joke. He had named her Ivy because of the sound of the word, and obscurely fascinated by a vague association of ideas. She had twined herself tightly round his heart, and he intended her to cling close to her father as to a tower of strength; forgetting while she was little that in the nature of things she would probably elect to cling to some one else. But he loved life well enough even for that event to give him

a certain satisfaction, apart from his more intimate feeling of loss.

After he had purchased the *Fair Maid* to occupy his loneliness, he hastened to accept a rather unprofitable freight to Australia simply for the opportunity of seeing his daughter in her own home. What made him dissatisfied there was not to see that she clung now to somebody else, but that the prop she had selected seemed on closer examination "a rather poor stick"—even in the matter of health. He disliked his son-in-law's studied civility even more than his method of handling the sum of money he had given Ivy at her marriage. But of his apprehensions he said nothing. Only on the day of his departure, when with the hall-door open he stood holding her hands and looking steadily into her eyes, he had said, "You know, my dear, all I have is for you and the chicks. Mind you write to me openly." She had answered him by an almost imperceptible movement of her head. She resembled her mother in the colour of her eyes, and in character—and also in this, that she understood him without many words.

Sure enough she had to write; and some of these letters made Captain Whalley lift his white eyebrows. For the rest he considered he was reaping the true reward of his life by being thus able to produce on demand whatever was needed. He had not enjoyed himself so much in a way since his wife had died. Characteristic-

ally enough his son-in-law's punctuality in failure caused him at a distance to feel a sort of kindness towards the man. The fellow was so perpetually being jammed on a lee shore that to charge it all to his reckless navigation would be manifestly unfair. No, no! He knew well what that meant. It was bad luck. His own had been simply marvellous, but he had seen in his life too many good men—seamen and others—go under with the sheer weight of bad luck not to recognise the fatal signs. For all that, he was cogitating on the best way of tying up very strictly every penny he had to leave, when, with a preliminary rumble of rumours (whose first sound reached him in Shanghai as it happened), the shock of the big failure came; and, after passing through the phases of stupor, of incredulity, of revolted indignation, he had to accept the fact that he had nothing to speak of to leave.

Upon that, as if he had only waited for this catastrophe, the unlucky man, away there in Melbourne, gave up his unprofitable game, and sat down—in an invalid's bath-chair at that too. "He will never walk again," wrote the wife. For the first time in his life Captain Whalley was a bit staggered.

The *Fair Maid* had to go to work in bitter earnest now. It was no longer a matter of preserving alive the memory of Dare-devil Harry Whalley in the Eastern Seas, or of keeping an old man in pocket-money and clothes, with, perhaps, a bill for a few hundred first-

class cigars thrown in at the end of the year. He would have to buckle-to, and keep her going hard on a scant allowance of gilt for the gingerbread scrolls at her stem and stern.

This necessity opened his eyes to the fundamental changes of the world. Of his past only familiar words remained, here and there, but the things and the men, as he had known them, were gone. The name of Gardner, Patteson, & Co. was still displayed on the walls of warehouses by the water-side, on the brass plates and window-panes in the business quarters of more than one Eastern port, but there was no longer a Gardner or a Patteson in the firm. There was no longer for Captain Whalley an arm-chair and a welcome in the private office, with a bit of business ready to be put in the way of an old friend, for the sake of bygone services. The husbands of the Gardner girls sat behind the desks in that room where, long after he had left the employ, he had kept his right of entrance in the old man's time. Their ships now had yellow funnels with black tops, and a timetable of appointed routes like a confounded service of tramways. The winds of December and June were all one to them; their captains (excellent young men he doubted not) were, to be sure, familiar with Whalley Island, because of late years the Government had established a white fixed light on the north end (with a red danger sector over the Condor Reef), but

most of them would have been extremely surprised to hear that a flesh-and-blood Whalley still existed—an old man going about the world trying to pick up a cargo here and there for his little barque.

And everywhere it was the same. Departed the men who would have nodded appreciatively at the mention of his name, and would have thought themselves bound in honour to do something for Dare-devil Harry Whalley. Departed the opportunities which he would have known how to seize; and gone with them the white-winged flock of clippers that lived in the boisterous uncertain life of the winds, skimming big fortunes out of the foam of the sea. In a world that pared down the profits to an irreducible minimum, in a world that was able to count its disengaged tonnage twice over every day, and in which lean charters were snapped up by cable three months in advance, there were no chances of fortune for an individual wandering haphazard with a little barque—hardly indeed any room to exist.

He found it more difficult from year to year. He suffered greatly from the smallness of remittances he was able to send his daughter. Meantime he had given up good cigars, and even in the matter of inferior cheroots limited himself to six a-day. He never told her of his difficulties, and she never enlarged upon her struggle to live. Their confidence in each other needed no explanations, and their perfect

understanding endured without protestations of gratitude or regret. He would have been shocked if she had taken it into her head to thank him in so many words, but he found it perfectly natural that she should tell him she needed two hundred pounds.

He had come in with the *Fair Maid* in ballast to look for a freight in the *Sofala's* port of registry, and her letter met him there. Its tenor was that it was no use mincing matters. Her only resource was in opening a boarding-house, for which the prospects, she judged, were good. Good enough, at any rate, to make her tell him frankly that with two hundred pounds she could make a start. He had torn the envelope open, hastily, on deck, where it was handed to him by the ship-chandler's runner, who had brought his mail at the moment of anchoring. For the second time in his life he was appalled, and remained stock-still at the cabin door with the paper trembling between his fingers. Open a boarding-house! Two hundred pounds for a start! The only resource! And he did not know where to lay his hands on two hundred pence.

All that night Captain Whalley walked the poop of his anchored ship, as though he had been about to close with the land in thick weather, and uncertain of his position after a run of many grey days without a sight of sun, moon, or stars. The black night twinkled with the guiding

lights of seamen and the steady straight lines of lights on shore; and all around the *Fair Maid* the riding lights of ships cast trembling trails upon the water of the roadstead. Captain Whalley saw not a gleam anywhere till the dawn broke and he found out that his clothing was soaked through with the heavy dew.

His ship was awake. He stopped short, stroked his wet beard, and descended the poop ladder backwards, with tired feet. At the sight of him the chief officer, lounging about sleepily on the quarter-deck, remained open-mouthed in the middle of a great, early-morning yawn.

"Good morning to you," pronounced Captain Whalley solemnly, passing into the cabin. But he checked himself in the doorway, and without looking back, "By the bye," he said, "there should be an empty wooden case put away in the lazarette. It has not been broken up—has it?"

The mate shut his mouth, and then asked as if dazed, "What empty case, sir?"

"A big flat packing-case belonging to that painting in my room. Let it be taken up on deck and tell the carpenter to look it over. I may want to use it before long."

The chief officer did not stir a limb till he had heard the door of the captain's state-room slam within the cuddy. Then he beckoned aft the second mate with his forefinger to tell him that there was something "in the wind."

When the bell rang Captain

Whalley's authoritative voice boomed out through a closed door, "Sit down and don't wait for me." And his impressed officers took their places, exchanging looks and whispers across the table. What! No breakfast? And after apparently knocking about all night on deck, too! Clearly, there was something in the wind. In the skylight above their heads, bowed earnestly over the plates, three wire cages rocked and rattled to the restless jumping of the

hungry canaries; and they could detect the sounds of their "old man's" deliberate movements within his state-room. Captain Whalley was methodically winding up the chronometers, dusting the portrait of his late wife, getting a clean white shirt out of the drawers, making himself ready in his punctilious unhurried manner to go ashore. He could not have swallowed a single mouthful of food that morning. He had made up his mind to sell the *Fair Maid*.

III.

Just at that time the Japanese were casting far and wide for ships of European build, and he had no difficulty in finding a purchaser, a speculator who drove a hard bargain, but paid cash down for the *Fair Maid*, with a view to a profitable resale. Thus it came about that Captain Whalley found himself on a certain afternoon descending the steps of one of the most important post-offices of the East with a slip of bluish paper in his hand. This was the receipt of a registered letter enclosing a draft for two hundred pounds, and addressed to Melbourne. Captain Whalley pushed the paper into his waistcoat-pocket, took his stick from under his arm, and walked down the street.

It was a recently opened and untidy thoroughfare with rudimentary side-walks and a soft layer of dust cushioning the whole width of the road. One end touched the slummy street

of Chinese shops near the harbour, the other drove straight on, houseless, for a couple of miles, through patches of jungle-like vegetation, to the yard gates of the new Consolidated Docks Company. The crude frontages of the new Government buildings alternated with the blank fencing of vacant plots, and the view of the sky seemed to give an added spaciousness to the broad vista. It was empty and shunned by natives after business hours, as though they had expected to see one of the tigers from the neighbourhood of the New Waterworks on the hill coming at a loping canter down the middle to get a Chinese shopkeeper for supper. Captain Whalley was not dwarfed by the solitude of the grandly planned street. He had too fine a presence for that. He was only a lonely figure walking purposefully, with a great white beard like a pilgrim,

and with a thick stick that resembled a weapon. On one side the new Courts of Justice had a low and unadorned portico of squat columns half concealed by a few old trees left in the approach. On the other the pavilion wings of the new Colonial Treasury came out to the line of the street. But Captain Whalley, who had now no ship and no home, remembered in passing that on that very site when he first came out from England there had stood a fishing village, a few mat huts erected on piles between a muddy tidal creek and a miry pathway that went writhing into a tangled wilderness without any docks or water-works.

No ship—no home. And his poor Ivy away there had no home either. A boarding-house is no sort of home though it may get you a living. His feelings were horribly rasped by the idea of the boarding-house. In his rank of life he had that truly aristocratic temperament characterised by a scorn of vulgar gentility and prejudiced views as to the derogatory nature of certain occupations. For his own part he had always preferred to be sailing merchant ships, which is a straightforward occupation, rather than to be buying and selling merchandise, of which the essence is to get the better of somebody in a bargain—an undignified trial of wits at best. His father had been Colonel Whalley (retired) of the H.E.I. Company's service, with very slender means besides his pen-

sion, but with distinguished connections. He could remember as a boy how frequently waiters at the inns, country tradesmen and small people of that sort, used to "My lord" the old warrior on the strength of his appearance.

Captain Whalley himself (he would have entered the Navy if his father had not died before he was fourteen) had something of a grand air which would have suited an old and glorious admiral; but he became lost like a straw in an eddy amongst the swarm of brown and yellow humanity filling a thoroughfare, that by contrast with the vast and empty avenue he had left seemed as narrow as a lane and absolutely riotous with life. The walls of the houses were blue; the shops of the Chinamen yawned like cavernous lairs; heaps of non-descript merchandise overflowed the gloom of the long range of arcades, and the fiery serenity of sunset took the middle of the street from end to end with a glow like the reflection of a fire. It fell on the bright colours and the dark faces of the barefooted crowd, on the pallid yellow backs of the half-naked jostling coolies, on the accoutrements of a tall Sikh trooper with a parted beard and fierce moustaches on sentry before the gate of the police compound. Looming very big above the heads in a red haze of dust, the tightly packed car of the electric tramway navigated cautiously up the human stream, with the incessant blare of its horn, in the manner of a steamer groping in a fog.

Captain Whalley emerged like a diver on the other side, and in the desert shade between the walls of closed warehouses removed his hat to cool his brow. A certain disrepute attached to the calling of a landlady of a boarding-house. These women were said to be rapacious, unscrupulous, untruthful; and though he condemned no class of his fellow-creatures—God forbid!—these were suspicions to which it was unseemly that a Whalley should lay herself open. He had not expostulated with her, however. He was confident she shared his feelings; he was sorry for her; he trusted her judgment; he considered it a merciful dispensation that he could help her once more,—but in his aristocratic heart of hearts he would have found it more easy to reconcile himself to the idea of her turning seamstress. Vaguely he remembered reading years ago a touching piece called the “Song of the Shirt.” It was all very well making songs about poor women. The granddaughter of Colonel Whalley—the landlady of a boarding-house. Pooh! He replaced his hat, dived into two pockets, and stopping a moment to apply a flaring match to the end of a cheap cheroot, blew an embittered cloud of smoke at a world that could hold such surprises.

Of one thing he was certain—that she was the own child of a clever mother. Now he had got over the wrench of parting with his ship, he perceived clearly that such a step had been unavoidable. Per-

haps he had been growing aware of it all along with an unconfessed knowledge. But she, far away there, must have had an intuitive perception of it, with the pluck to face that truth and the courage to speak out—all the qualities which had made her mother a woman of such excellent counsel.

It would have had to come to that in the end! It was fortunate she had forced his hand. In another year or two it would have been an utterly barren sale. To keep the ship going he had been involving himself deeper every year. He was defenceless before the insidious work of adversity, to whose more open assaults he could present a firm front; like a cliff that stands unmoved the open battering of the sea, with a lofty ignorance of the treacherous backwash undermining its base. As it was, every liability satisfied, her request answered, and owing no man a penny, there remained to him from the proceeds a sum of five hundred pounds put away safely. In addition he had upon his person some forty odd dollars—enough to pay his hotel bill, providing he did not linger too long in the modest bedroom where he had taken refuge.

Scantily furnished, and with a waxed floor, it opened into one of the side-verandahs. The straggling low building of bricks was as airy as a bird-cage, and resounded with the incessant flapping of rattan screens worried by the wind between the whitewashed square pillars of the sea-front. The rooms were

lofty, a ripple of sunshine flowed over the ceilings; and the periodical invasions of tourists from some passenger steamer in the harbour flitted through the wind-swept dusk of the apartments with the tumult of their unfamiliar voices and impermanent presences, like relays of migratory shades condemned to speed headlong round the earth without leaving a trace. The babble of their irruptions ebbed out as suddenly as it had arisen; the draughty corridors and the long chairs of the verandahs knew their sight-seeing hurry or their prostrate repose no more; and Captain Whalley, substantial and dignified, left wellnigh alone in the vast hotel by each light-hearted skurry, felt more and more like a stranded tourist with no aim in view, like a forlorn traveller without a home. In the solitude of his room he smoked thoughtfully, gazing at the two sea-chests which held all that he could call his own in this world. A thick roll of charts in a sheath of sailcloth leaned in a corner; the flat packing-case containing the portrait in oils and the three carbon photographs had been pushed under the bed. He was tired of discussing terms, of assisting at surveys, of all the routine of the business. What to the other parties was merely the sale of a ship was to him a momentous event involving a radically new view of existence. He knew that after this ship there would be no other; and the hopes of his youth, the exercise of his abilities, every feeling and achievement of his

manhood, had been indissolubly connected with ships. He had served ships; he had owned ships; and even the year or so of his actual retirement from the sea had been made bearable by the idea that he had only to stretch out his hand full of money to get a ship. He had felt as though he were the owner of all the ships in the world. The selling of this one was weary work; but when she passed from him at last, when he signed the last receipt, it was as though all the ships had gone out of the world together, leaving him on the shore of inaccessible oceans with seven hundred pounds in his hands.

Striding firmly, without haste, along the quay, Captain Whalley averted his glances from the familiar roadstead. Two generations of seamen born since his first day at sea stood between him and all these ships at the anchorage. His own was sold, and he had been asking himself, What next?

From the feeling of loneliness, of inward emptiness,—and of loss too, as if his very soul had been taken out of him forcibly,—there had sprung at first a desire to start right off and join his daughter. “Here are the last pence,” he would say to her; “take them, my dear. And here’s your old father: you must take him too.”

And then his soul recoiled, as if afraid of what lay hidden at the bottom of this impulse. When one is thoroughly weary all sorts of nonsense come into one’s head. A pretty gift it

would have been for a poor woman — this seven hundred pounds with the incumbrance of a hale old fellow more than likely to last for years and years to come. Was he not as fit to die in harness as any of the youngsters in charge of these anchored ships out yonder? He was as solid now as ever he had been. But as to who would give him work to do, that was another matter. Were he, with his appearance and antecedents, to go about looking for a junior's berth, people, he was afraid, would not take him seriously; or else if he succeeded in impressing them, he would maybe obtain their pity, which would be like stripping yourself naked to be kicked. He was not anxious to give himself away for less than nothing. He had no use for anybody's pity. On the other hand, a command—

the only thing he could try for with due regard for common decency—was not likely to be lying in wait for him at the corner of the next street. Commands don't go a-begging nowadays. Ever since he had come ashore to carry out the business of the sale he had kept his ears open, but had heard no hint of one being vacant in the port. And even if there had been one, his successful past itself stood in his way. He had been his own employer too long. The only credential he could produce was the testimony of his whole life. What better recommendation could any one require? But vaguely he felt that the unique document would be looked upon as an archaic curiosity of the Eastern waters, a screed traced in obsolete words—in a half-forgotten language.

IV.

Revolving these thoughts, he strolled on near the railings of the quay, broad-chested, without a stoop, as though his big shoulders had never felt the burden of the loads that must be carried between the cradle and the grave. No single betraying fold or line of care disfigured the reposeful modelling of his face. It was full and untanned; and the upper part emerged massively quiet out of the downward flow of silvery hair, with the striking delicacy of its clear complexion and the powerful width of the forehead. The first cast of his glance fell on you candid and swift like a boy's; but be-

cause of the ragged snowy thatch of the eyebrows the affability of his attention acquired the character of a dark and searching scrutiny. With age he put on flesh a little, had increased his girth like an old tree presenting no symptoms of decay; and even the opulent lustrous ripple of white hairs upon his chest seemed an attribute of unquenchable vitality and vigour.

Once rather proud of his great bodily strength, and even of his personal appearance, conscious of his worth, and firm in his rectitude, there had remained to him, like the heritage of departed prosperity,

the tranquil bearing of a man who had proved himself fit in every sort of way for the life of his choice. He strode on squarely under the projecting brim of an ancient Panama hat. It had a low crown, a crease through its whole diameter, a narrow black ribbon. Imperishable and a little discoloured, this headgear made it easy to pick him out from afar on thronged wharves and in the busy streets. He had never adopted the comparatively modern fashion of pipeclayed cork helmets. He disliked the form; and he hoped he could manage to keep a cool head to the end of his life without all these contrivances for hygienic ventilation. His hair was cropped close, his linen always of immaculate whiteness; a suit of thin grey flannel, much worn but scrupulously brushed, floated about his burly limbs, adding to his bulk by the looseness of its cut. The years had mellowed the good-humoured, imperturbable audacity of his prime into a temper carelessly serene; and the leisurely tapping of his iron-shod stick accompanied his footfalls with a self-confident sound on the flagstones. It was impossible to connect such a fine presence and this unruffled aspect with the belittling troubles of poverty; the man's whole existence appeared to pass before you, facile and large, in the freedom of means as ample as the clothing of his body.

The irrational dread of having to break upon his five hundred pounds for personal expenses in the hotel disturbed

the steady poise of his mind. There was no time to lose. The bill was running up. He nourished the hope that this sum would perhaps be the means, if everything else failed, of obtaining him some work which, keeping his body and soul together (not a matter of great outlay), would enable him to be of use to his daughter. To his mind it was her own money which he employed, as it were, in backing her father principally for her benefit. Once at work, he would help her with the greater part of his earnings; he was good for many years yet, and this boarding-house business, he argued to himself, whatever the prospects, could not be much of a gold-mine from the first start. But what work? He was ready to lay hold of anything in an honest way so that it came quickly to his hand; because the five hundred pounds must be preserved intact for eventual use. That was the great point. With the entire five hundred one felt a substance at one's back; but it seemed to him that should he let it dwindle to four-fifty or even four-eighty, all the efficiency would be gone out of the money, as though there were some magic power in the round figure. But what sort of work?

Confronted by that haunting question as by an uneasy ghost, for whom he had no exorcising formula, Captain Whalley stopped short on the apex of a small bridge spanning steeply the bed of a canalised tidal creek with granite shores. Moored between the square

blocks a sea-going Malay prau floated half hidden under the arch of masonry, with her spars lowered down, without a sound of life onboard, and covered from stem to stern with a ridge of mats. He had left behind him the overheated pavements bordered by the stone frontages that, like the sheer face of cliffs, followed the sweep of the quays; and an unconfined spaciousness of orderly and sylvan aspect opened before him its wide plots of rolled grass like pieces of green carpet smoothly pegged out, its long ranges of trees lined up in colossal porticos of dark shafts roofed with a vault of branches.

Some of them ended at the sea. It was a terraced shore; and beyond, upon the level expanse, profound and glistening like the gaze of a dark-blue eye, an oblique band of stippled purple lengthened itself indefinitely through the gap between a couple of verdant twin islets. The masts and spars of a few ships far away, hull down in the outer roads, sprang straight from the water in a fine maze of rosy lines pencilled on the clear shadow of the eastern board. Captain Whalley gave them a long glance. The ship, once his own, was anchored out there. It was staggering to think that it was open to him no longer to take a boat at the jetty and get himself pulled off to her when the evening came. To no ship. Perhaps never more. Before the sale was concluded, and till the purchase-money had been paid, he had spent daily some time on board

the *Fair Maid*. The money had been paid this very morning, and now, all at once, there was positively no ship that he could go on board of when he liked; no ship that would need his presence in order to do her work—to live. It seemed an incredible state of affairs, something too bizarre to last. And the sea was full of craft of all sorts. There was that prau lying so still swathed in her shroud of sewn palm-leaves—she too had her indispensable man. They lived through each other, this Malay he had never seen, and this high-sterned thing of no size that seemed to be resting after a long journey. And of all the ships in sight, near and far, each was provided with a man, the man without whom the finest ship is a dead thing, a floating and purposeless log.

After his one glance at the roadstead he went on, since there was nothing to turn back for, and the time must be got through somehow. The avenues of big trees ran straight over the Esplanade, cutting each other at diverse angles, columnar below and luxuriant above. The interlaced boughs high up there seemed to slumber; not a leaf stirred overhead: and the reedy cast-iron lamp-posts in the middle of the road, gilt like sceptres, diminished in a long perspective, with their globes of white porcelain atop, resembling a barbarous decoration of ostriches' eggs displayed in a row. The flaming sky kindled a tiny crimson spark upon the

glistening surface of each glassy shell.

With his chin sunk a little, his hands behind his back, and the end of his stick marking the gravel with a faint wavering line at his heels, Captain Whalley reflected that if a ship without a man was like a body without a soul, a sailor without a ship was of not much more account in this world than an aimless log adrift upon the sea. The log might be sound enough by itself, tough of fibre, and hard to destroy—but what of that! And a sudden sense of irremediable idleness weighted his feet like a great fatigue.

A succession of open carriages came bowling along the new sea-road. You could see across the wide grassplots the discs of vibration made by the spokes. The bright domes of the parasols swayed lightly outwards like full-blown blossoms on the rim of a vase; and the quiet sheet of dark-blue water, crossed by a bar of purple, made a background for the spinning wheels and the high action of the horses, whilst the turbaned heads of the Indian servants elevated above the line of the sea horizon glided rapidly on the paler blue of the sky. In an open space near the little bridge each turn-out trotted smartly in a wide curve away from the sunset; then pulling up sharp, entered the main alley in a long slow-moving file with the great red stillness of the sky at the back. The trunks of mighty trees stood all touched with red on the same side, the

air itself seemed aflame under the high foliage, the very ground under the hoofs of the horses was red. The wheels turned solemnly; one after another the sunshades drooped, folding their colours like gorgeous flowers shutting their petals at the end of the day. In the whole half-mile of human beings no voice uttered a distinct word, only a faint thudding noise went on mingled with slight jingling sounds, and the motionless heads and shoulders of men and women sitting in couples emerged stolidly above the leather of lowered hoods—as if wooden. But one carriage and pair coming late did not join the line.

It fled along in a noiseless roll; but on entering the avenue one of the dark bays snorted loudly, arching his neck and shying against the steel-tipped pole; a flake of foam fell from the bit upon the point of a satiny shoulder, and the dusky face of the coachman leaned forward at once over the hands taking a fresh grip of the reins. It was a long dark-green landau, having a dignified and buoyant motion between the sharply curved C-springs, and a sort of strictly official majesty in its supreme elegance. It seemed more roomy than is usual, its horses seemed slightly bigger, the appointments a shade more perfect, the servants perched somewhat higher on the box. The dresses of three women—two young and pretty, and one, handsome, large, of mature age—seemed to fill completely

the shallow body of the carriage. The fourth face was that of a man, heavy lidded, distinguished, and sallow, with a sombre, thick iron-grey imperial and moustaches, which somehow had the air of solid appendages. His Excellency—

The rapid motion of that one equipage made all the others appear utterly inferior, blighted, and reduced to crawl painfully at a snail's pace. The landau distanced the whole file in a sort of sustained rush; the features of the occupants whirling out of sight left behind an impression of fixed stares and impassive vacancy; and after it had vanished in full flight as it were, notwithstanding the long line of vehicles hugging the curb at a walk, the whole lofty vista of the avenue seemed to lie open and emptied of life in the enlarged impression of an august solitude.

Captain Whalley had lifted his head to look, and his mind, disturbed in its meditation, turned with wonder (as men's minds will do) to matters of no importance. It struck him that it was to this port, where he had just sold his last ship, that he had come with the very first he had ever owned, and with his head full of a plan for opening a new trade with a distant part of the Archipelago. The then governor had given him no end of encouragement. No Excellency he—this Mr Denham—this governor with his jacket off; a man who tended night and day, so to speak, the growing pros-

perity of the settlement with the self-forgetful devotion of a nurse for a child she loves; a lone bachelor who lived as in a camp with the few servants and his three dogs in what was called then the Government Bungalow: a low-roofed structure on the half-cleared slope of a hill, with a new flagstaff in front and a police orderly on the verandah. He remembered toiling up that hill under a heavy sun for his audience; the unfurnished aspect of the cool shaded room; the long table covered at one end with piles of papers, and with two guns, a brass telescope, a small bottle of oil with a feather stuck in the neck at the other, and the flattering attention given to him by the man in power. It was an undertaking full of risk he had to expound, but a twenty minutes' talk in the Government Bungalow on the hill had made it go smoothly from the start. And as he was retiring Mr Denham, already seated before the papers, called out after him, "Next month the *Dido* starts for a cruise that way, and I shall request her captain officially to give you a look in and see how you get on." The *Dido* was one of the smart frigates on the China station—and five-and-thirty years make a big slice of time. Five-and-thirty years ago an enterprise like his had enough importance for the colony to be looked after by a Queen's ship. A big slice of time. Individuals were of some account then. Men like him-

self; men, too, like poor Evans, for instance, with his red face, his coal-black whiskers, and his restless eyes, who had set up the first patent slip for repairing small ships, on the edge of the forest, in a lonely bay three miles up the coast. Mr Denham had encouraged that enterprise too, and yet somehow poor Evans had ended by dying at home deucedly hard up. His son, they said, was squeezing oil out of coconuts for a living on some God-forsaken islet of the Indian Ocean; but it was from that patent slip in a lonely wooded bay that had sprung the workshops of the Consolidated Docks Company, with its three graving basins carved out of solid rock, its wharves, its jetties, its electric-light plant, its steam-power houses—with its gigantic sheer-legs, fit to lift the heaviest weight ever carried afloat, and whose head could be seen like the top of a queer white monument peeping over bushy points of land and sandy promontories, as you approached the New Harbour from the west.

There had been a time when men counted: there were not so many carriages in the colony then, though Mr Denham, he fancied, had a buggy. And Captain Whalley seemed to be swept out of the great avenue by the swirl of a mental backwash. He remembered muddy shores, a harbour without quays, the one solitary wooden pier (but that was a public work) jutting out crookedly, the first coal-sheds erected on Monkey Point, that caught fire mysteri-

ously and smouldered for days, so that amazed ships came into a roadstead full of sulphurous smoke and the sun hung blood-red at midday. He remembered the things, the faces, and something more besides—like the faint flavour of a cup quaffed to the bottom, like a subtle sparkle of the air that was not to be found in the atmosphere of to-day.

In this evocation, swift and full of detail like a flash of magnesium light into the niches of a dark memorial hall, Captain Whalley contemplated things once important, the efforts of small men, the growth of a great place, but now robbed of all consequence by the greatness of accomplished facts, by hopes greater still; and they gave him for a moment such an almost physical grip upon time, such a comprehension of our unchangeable feelings, that he stopped short, struck the ground with his stick, and ejaculated mentally, "What the devil am I doing here!" He seemed lost in a sort of surprise; but he heard his name called out in wheezy tones once, twice—and turned on his heels slowly.

He beheld then, waddling towards him autocratically, a man of an old-fashioned and gouty aspect, with hair as white as his own, but with shaved florid cheeks, and wearing a necktie—almost a neckcloth—with transversely projecting ends; with round legs, round arms, a round body, a round face—and generally producing the effect of his short

person having been distended by means of an air-pump as much as the seams of his clothing would stand. This was the Master-Attendant of the port. A master-attendant is a superior sort of harbour-master; a person, out in the East, of some consequence in his sphere; a Government official, a magistrate for the waters of the port, and possessed of vast but ill-defined disciplinary authority over seamen of all classes. This particular Master-Attendant was reported to consider it miserably inadequate, on the ground that it did not include the power of life and death. This was a jocular exaggeration. Captain Elliott was fairly satisfied with his

position, and nursed no inconsiderable sense of such power as he had. His conceited and tyrannical disposition did not allow him to let it dwindle in his hands for want of use. The uproarious, choleric frankness of his comments on people's character and conduct caused him to be feared at bottom; though in conversation many pretended not to mind him in the least, others would only smile sourly at the mention of his name, and there were even some who dared to pronounce him "a meddling old ruffian." But for almost all of them the prospect of encountering one of Captain Elliott's outbreaks was nearly as distasteful to face as a chance of annihilation.

(To be continued.)

MY LORD THE BUCK.

THE following account of a roebuck's career, up to the sixth year of his life, is actual fact, and written from personal knowledge. Of course there are many incidents omitted; but I have endeavoured to collect here together those which I considered might be of most interest to the general reader. And I believe that those who have studied the habits of roe-deer will be interested to read of what I saw happen in the "fairy ring." It seemed to me that the old doe wished to combine teaching with amusement, for the game was evidently splendid practice in rapid turning. How often the life of a hunted wild animal depends on its ability to double quickly!

I.

The first time I saw him was in the company of his mother and a sister, whom he much resembled. He was playing and nibbling along the soft edge of a little tarn. What a dainty, nimble, unconcerned-looking little person he was! I sat hidden on a hillock about 200 yards distant watching the trio. His mother was a very large old doe, whom I had known by sight for several seasons; but this was the only one in which she had been successful in rearing both her infants to such an age of semi-independence. I have reason to believe that a poaching collie destroyed her first family. What happened to the collie I alone could tell, but I have private reasons for not doing so. Out of the old doe's second family of twins one survived—a strapping young daughter.

The third year of our acquaintance, of which I now write, she had two really bonnie bairns to show, and very careful and watchful she was of them.

Her former experiences in trying to raise a family had taught her much. How constantly she jerked up her head and stood almost motionless for minutes together looking and sniffing, the only movement being the twitching of her large ears to keep off the gnats, which were almost intolerable. She was evidently very determined to succeed in raising a son and heir, and meant to avoid risks, for at this period of his life her male offspring was a very irresponsible person, and never seemed to consider danger. When she fed, he amused himself picking and nibbling along at no great distance from her heels. When she bolted, he generally bolted too, running alongside with his little sister; but I have seen him object to go, and then his mamma had to hustle him, with nose and foot, in no gentle manner.

On the August day when I first beheld my young forest lordling I was out with my

rifle in search of a relation of his, whom I had observed while returning one evening from duck-shooting, and who had seemingly a nice head. He had made for himself many deep beds in the long heather in the hollow below where I sat, and it was standing almost in one of these beds that I put a Mannlicher bullet through him on the following evening.

I specially refer to this relative of my hero because he was a buck remarkable for a feat of strength of which he carried the proofs to his dying day. When he lay dead in the heather before me I noticed a curious mark on his neck, and stooping to examine, discovered a stout wire snare fastened round it. On removing the snare, which I have carefully kept as a curiosity, I found a deep groove in the poor brute's skin, with white hairs edging it, proving that he had worn this unwelcome collar for many a long day. The jagged ends of wire had also scraped a white patch on the neck. He must have had a desperate struggle to break free, and had many moments of discomfort afterwards; but he was in fair condition, and had a very nice head, with strong rough horn.

I have found and removed poachers' snares set for roe more than once, but have never seen a roe before with any mark of a snare on it.

It might have been a week later ere I saw the old mother-doe out again with her family, when again I found her feeding by the little tarn in the hollow. I had my rifle with me, and had

intended pushing farther east to stalk a buck that lived about a mile and a half away; but the family attracted me, and I resolved to stay and study them, so far as wind and cover permitted. I was well rewarded.

I had seen them directly I came over the ridge, and assuring myself that I was unobserved, I dropped back and walked along under the crest of the hill parallel to the line on which the doe was moving.

The heather was deep at the head of the tarn, where the ridge ended, and I wormed my way through it on knees and elbows until I came to a fat fir-tree, with an old seedy-looking whin-bush sticking up beside it. Here I halted, squatted, and fetched out my binoculars. I prefer binoculars to a telescope when stalking roe. They are lighter and quicker to get into action, and can be used in long heather and among trees, where a telescope from its length would be almost useless.

Having got into a nice comfortable position, I proceeded to watch Mrs Roe and her infants, but was not permitted that pleasure for long. The old lady ate and moved quickly, her children close at heel. The latter seemed to taste more than they ate, and, like other Highlanders I have known, "tasting" seemed to produce in them hilarity; for occasionally down went their heads, up went their heels, and after their mother they dashed with a sort of squirming side-kick, quite their own and not easily imitated.

Suddenly the old doe halted, looked round at her little

dappled brats, then turned to her left and set off up and over the ridge on her side of the tarn, the brats following, and in a few seconds all three were out of sight.

I could not understand the reason of this movement. There appeared to be no sign or sound of an enemy, and I felt absolutely certain that they had not winded me, for the air was still as air could be. I resolved to stalk them, and to try and spy their movements a second time.

Some 400 yards ahead was a deep young fir-planting, to which roe often run when danger threatens. A wide fir-studded hollow lay between the ridge and the planting. If the old doe had not taken her infants straight to covert, my best chance of a second view was to turn southwards and come in at the top end of the hollow near the young planting. This I did, and as I was cautiously advancing to spy I suddenly caught sight of a large pair of ears appearing over the edge of the hill, and not more than thirty yards from me. I dropped into the heather at once, and crawled a yard or two to the right to the cover of an old broken tree. Here I cautiously raised myself and peered forward. I could see no more than the back of the head and ears of a large doe, apparently standing listening. Presently the head and ears disappeared, and quickly and silently I crept forward to another tree some ten yards farther on. Here I raised myself again, and found the doe in full view, and certainly within

a gunshot of me. She appeared totally unaware of my presence, and what she was about I could not imagine, for she strolled backwards and forwards, as a man might who was making up his mind about something.

Suddenly she sprang forward a yard or two into a round open space in the heather, hitherto unnoticed by me, and began running round and round. As if from out of the very earth, and almost at the same moment, into the circle jumped Master Buck and his sister, and before I had time to guess at what was going to happen, I found myself the solitary spectator of certainly the most novel and graceful circus I had ever seen, or may ever hope to see again.

Round went the old doe faster and faster, her children after her; then she faced about, chasing the latter this time; again, she turned and was followed; and so the game went on. Presently all three were out of the ring, led by the doe, and bounding away through the heather, over the ridge and out of sight. I thought that I had seen the last of them for one day; but not so: back I beheld the performers coming at full gallop, and this time they had another performer with them. Last year's fawn had joined the troupe. On they all came without a stop, and into the fairy ring, where I was treated to another graceful performance, which seemed rather more complicated than the first. I wish I had studied it better; but I was so surprised at the whole thing, and it was

over so quickly, that I really had not a fair chance to grasp every detail. In a few minutes the ring was empty, the performers out of sight, and I left alone to wonder if what I saw was real or imaginary. Real it certainly was, for when my astonishment had worn off a little I got up and went forward to view the fairy circle, where I found abundant traces of my fairies, and a few yards away I found another circle, which was evidently in use, and farther on another, which appeared old and disused. In one stood a tree, in another two stumps of trees cut down, the latter being

the one most in use, to judge by the state of the ground.

I went home happy that evening, for I felt that I had been a witness to a spectacle few sportsmen have had an opportunity of witnessing. It was all beautiful too, and strangely picturesque. The tall dark firs with their long shadows, the deep fading heather all around, the bright gleam of water through the trees, and the real fairies caught playing in the magic ring. The picture was my own, to hang for ever in my mind's long gallery of sporting scenes. At present it is the gem of the collection.

II.

To the roe-stalker the second year in the life of a buck is particularly uninteresting, inasmuch as a year-old buck might as well be a ghost, for in stalking language he has no "head" and no "body." Nor has he properly materialised even in his third year. He may show something of a body, if the feeding is good; but his horns are just little sticks of things, trying to throw out brow-points. In the fourth year I have seen bucks with quite nice heads, but have always noted that these fourth-year heads were more remarkable for length than strength. Long thin points, weak stems, and shallow coronates was the general style; but though slender, I have seen them nicely rough. I attribute the roughness to the exceptionally good feeding roe obtain on the ground where most of my studies in roe-life were made.

From the time when I first saw my young lord of the woods playing in the fairy ring with his mother and sister until he reached his fourth year, there is not much of interest to write about him. I saw him frequently each year, and usually about the same spot. After the beginning of September, however, he, with the others, would shift about from end to end of the big wood, always returning in the summer to the old haunts.

There is a loch of fair-sized dimensions lying among the trees a little to the west of these haunts, and late in September, when most of the barley is cut, many wild-duck gather in to its waters at dusk. Hidden in the heather by this loch I and my old brown spaniel have often lain at sunset, and waited, sometimes through a long period of darkness, for the big sea-fed mallards to flight in

at the rising moon and flowing tide. It is not well for the timid to be out by a woodland Highland loch in the early moments of darkness. The strange cries and sounds from earth, air, and water are weird in the extreme. I know a man who was followed off the hill by something shrieking at him in the dark. He had a fishing-rod with him and hit at the thing, which was close to him, but he never touched it, and it was too dark to see a yard's distance. A bird it must have been, but of what sort would be difficult to tell; probably it was an owl.

When the shadows were beginning to deepen round the loch how often I have seen the Buck, sometimes alone, sometimes in company, appear suddenly by its waters, as if from nowhere, and come feeding towards me, often to within a very short distance of my hiding-place beneath a low-spreading fir-tree. Once I could almost have thrown my cap on him; but he passed away feeding across the wind, without ever seeming to be aware of danger. And when it was almost too dark to see anything, he has come splashing through the shallow water till I fancied he could only be a few yards distant. Several times

this happened within less than half an hour of rapid firing at ducks. Either the darkness rendered him bold or it made him foolish. I have never decided which. If he happened to get wind of me when I was going off the hill in the moonlight or darkness, he would go bounding away through the heather barking like a collie, and I could hear him stamping about on the hard dry knolls on my left, evidently in no end of a rage at being disturbed at such an hour.

I saw him fired at more than once during his third year, when the guns were out after blackgame, but, to my joy, each time he escaped—once from a shot at close quarters. How he was missed is a wonder, but he was, and I was glad, for he looked a promising buck, and I had a personal interest in him.

How many roedeer are knocked over by shot-guns in a drive, like hares and rabbits! If only the organisers of these roe-drives knew what splendid stalking the gallant little roebuck affords, I am sure they would spare him for the more noble method of sport. And, as I believe I have read in Millais' excellent work on deer, a good pair of roebuck horns is a far rarer trophy than a pair from the head of a stag.

III.

My lord the Buck in his fourth year was more advanced for his age than any roe that I remember to have seen. I studied his head through the glass on more than one occasion,

and was struck at once by the fine set-on of the horns for so young an animal. Most of the heads which I have seen at my old home, belonging to what I judged to be four-year-old

bucks, have shown a distinctly narrow tendency; indeed the horns in most cases were almost parallel to each other. But in older beasts the set-on is different. It becomes a V-shape, which of course gives the head a far better appearance. This increase in span comes, I believe, in the fifth-year growth of horn, and once it appears it remains until old age. There hangs from the wall at home the head of a very old roebuck, with horns that have distinctly deteriorated, but their set-on is perfect. I shot that buck on the 22nd of November 1889. I believe that, as a rule, roebucks shed their horns about three weeks before that date.

I was returning home rather late one evening from a long and tiring prowling after a good buck, whose haunts lay a mile or two eastwards from those of my hero, when I suddenly sighted the latter scraping his horns on a fir-sapling, about 200 yards or so away from me. This was my first view of him as a four-year-old. I guessed it was him at once, for the forester, who knows something of the ways of roe, had informed me that he was back on the old ground.

As my lord appeared to be busy and had not noticed me, I lay down by a tussock of heather and proceeded to examine him through the glass. He was certainly an exceptionally fine animal for his age, insomuch that I began to doubt if it was my old friend. But roebucks, unless much disturbed, seldom wander

so early as August, and the forester, who had told me where I should find him, is seldom wrong as to the movements of the deer. He watches them closely, and has opportunities of doing so that no one else has, for he lives among them.

I had time to study my lord well before he moved off, which was in the wrong direction, and as darkness was approaching I resolved to leave him unstalked for that day. I considered, however, that he was worth having, there being few good heads to be seen that season, so was up and after him at daybreak next morning. But no luck. I saw him and stalked him, but he vanished in some mysterious fashion before I could get within shot. And the same thing happened the next morning, and on many other mornings. Then I tried the evening stalk again. I saw nothing of him the first evening. On the second, as I came over a ridge into deep heather, up jumped a buck about a gunshot away, and bolted off towards a brake of whin on the opposite side of the hollow, where he stood broadside on, offering a fair chance for a shot, if a trifle too far off. It was a buck I could see well enough, and I felt pretty sure the one I sought; but there was no time to fumble for the glass to make sure. If I wanted to get him I must take my shot quickly, and standing, for a kneeling shot was out of the question in heather that reached to the waist. I stood

firm, took as quick and cool an aim as I could, and fired. He fell.

It did not take long to get up to where he lay; but judge of my disgust to find that I had knocked over a wretched little three-year-old, with horns like penknife handles—"just wee bit stickies," as I heard them described afterwards.

However, it is well to be philosophical. My big friend was still to be got, and no doubt this little fellow would taste as well as he in a pasty. I found, too, that I had made an interesting, if fluke, shot. My rifle was sighted rather high and to the right, which fact I had forgotten to allow for in firing, with the result

that the bullet had caught the little buck on the extreme end of his spine and paralysed him. So the venison was very little spoilt; but otherwise he had no luck, for half an inch more to the right would have missed him!

I soon had him gralloched, and with feet coupled together I slung him over my shoulder and strode off to the forester's house, about three-quarters of a mile distant.

Whether my lord the Buck was a witness to the murder of his relative I know not; but this I know, that he deserted this part of the big wood for the remainder of the year. At any rate, I saw him there no more before I had to go South.

IV.

The year following I was late in getting North. It was the beginning of September ere I got up to the haunts of the roe. As usual, I made my first inquiries from the keepers, and balanced what they told me against what I heard later from the forester. Without a doubt, from both accounts, my lord the Buck had been back in his old haunts all the summer, and was reported to have "jist a graund heed."

He had been frequently seen feeding, late in the afternoon, on a field of clover belonging to the forester, and generally in the company of two large does. The clover had been cut by this time; but he had been seen also on the "foggage" (*Anglicè*, aftermath) once or twice, just before dark.

The clover-field bordered on the fir-wood directly below the big hollow, which was my lord's domain. I easily found two paths leading from the hollow to the clover, and on the second evening of my arrival home I took up a position shortly before dark in view of one of these paths, but saw nothing of the Buck. The next evening I watched the other path, with no better luck. I made up my mind that he had shifted his quarters, for I saw the two does on each occasion drifting down towards the clover without their lord and master. I therefore resolved on an early morning prow, and two or three days later was on the hill before dawn. There was a fading moon in the western skies, whose silver light helped

me on my way and brought me without mishap to the back of a long ridge, the summit of which commanded a view of the edge of the wood, and some rough boggy grazing right in front, with the forester's croft and the clover-field to the right. To the left a belt of firs ran from the top of the ridge to the wood.

I crept softly to this belt, and lay down to wait for the dawn.

If time and space permitted, what a lot could be written about the mystic hour of shades, which daylight drives hence. The tamest, dullest nature must have its strange imaginings in that hour before dawn. Some weak natures I have seen to dread it, and croak for the daylight. Let these latter stay in their beds. This mystic hour is no time for them to be abroad. Would those dark quickly moving objects on the stubble alarm them into thinking some terror was upon them? They are only blackgame, probably descended from the trees on the belt but five minutes before my arrival. And those two forms beyond. What are they? Something uncanny? No; keep your eye steady on their movements. They are hares, strangely magnified in this queer morning gloam. Things are gradually beginning to define themselves now. The light is coming. What a wet, grey, silvery look everything has. How strangely those little streaks of mist hang over the scraps of water in the hollow beneath me. What is that

form standing up by the rushes? A roe? Too big. It must be some crofter's beast. More daylight. It must be a roe. No, yes, yes; a roe, and another lying down near it. Both large does. I have my glass well on them. Accidentally I shift to the right, and what is that comes into focus? The head, neck, and shoulders of a buck, lying down, his body more than half concealed behind a big tussock of rushes. For a few moments I feel rather shaky with excitement, so I put down the glass. I watch steadily. There is daylight now to see quite plainly. It is a buck with a very nice head. The shape is perfect, the points are long, but I have seen stronger horn. "Another year, and what a grand head that would make," was my first thought. "Another year, and some one else may have got it," was my second. From his appearance, position, and the society he was in, I had not the slightest doubt that once more I beheld my lord the Buck. Query, Should I take the first chance from where I stood, 200 yards distant at least, or should I skirt round down wind to the left and come up behind the opposite ridge to stalk him through the trees? While I weighed the matter in my mind he rose, and I decided to risk a long shot then and there. I got into a comfortable kneeling position, took a careful, steady aim, and pulled. I missed him clean. The bullet passed over his back, and sputtered into some shallow

mud beyond. There was no good trying another shot at that distance when he ran, so I just sat down and felt glum. I should have aimed lower, I suppose, having to fire downhill.

I never had another chance of a shot at him that season, although I saw him frequently, and stalked him again and again. He became as cunning as a fox, and knew every turn of the undulating wooded ground on which he lived.

After I went South others tried for him, but with no better luck than mine.

He was easily distinguishable, having broken the top off the left horn.

I have now beside me what I feel pretty certain is the right horn shed in this, his fifth, year. It was picked up by the forester in the heather near his haunts. It measures $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length and $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches round the burr. The brow-point is $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches long.

V.

There is a curious prejudice in my part of the world against killing roe before August. Our folk say that roe are not in season before that month, which of course I have not the slightest hesitation in saying is crass ignorance. As a matter of fact, bucks are off on their honeymoon about the beginning of August. In late spring and through the summer they are in fair condition, and have heads clear of velvet, besides having thin coats, which, in my humble opinion, show up good heads far better than do heavy grey winter ones. After August, too, a roe's hair gets loose, and by October, when most roe are killed, they have coats which could be pulled out in handfuls.

But for fear of offending I have never attempted to kill a buck before August, a mistake that I regret; for had I had my rifle with me one day in April last year when out for a spy on the hill, I doubt not but that I could have slain the finest buck

I ever saw. And that buck was undoubtedly my lord of other years.

He was standing, when I came on him at midday, by a little loch among the trees and heather, near to the spot where we had first met, six years before. His head was turned from me as he gazed windward across the water, and a doe lay at his feet. I had come suddenly over a ridge, and found myself not thirty yards from either of them, with the doe looking straight at me. She rose stiffly, and her movement caused the buck to turn his head. He was really a grand beast. The full deep coronates, stout dark horns, rough as ancient birch-trees, with long curved points above, formed a head such as I have never seen on any living buck before. It was a head to dream of,—and if I had only had my rifle, the wearer of those grand horns was at my mercy.

I plugged an imaginary bullet

at him as he jogged slowly away with his lady. He seemed to know that there was no cause to hurry, and frequently turned to gaze back ere disappearing from sight into the next hollow. I sat down in the heather and sighed, longing to have such a head as a trophy, and yet inwardly wondering at man's lust to kill so beautiful a creature as a roe.

The next day I had to go South.

I wonder if those well acquainted with the habits of roedeer have often come across the newly shed "velvet" from a buck's horns. Near to the spot where I saw the big buck was a little fir-sapling, peeled nearly white, and at its base I found, almost complete, the velvet of both horns of a roebuck. I put it in an envelope, which I happened to have in my pocket, and have it now laid by somewhere as a curiosity.

It was autumn when I returned again to the Highlands. Many prowls had I in search of my lord the Buck. At misty morn, at midgy eve, was I upon the hill, but no sight of him could I obtain. Signs there were plenty. His lordship's beds were newly laid in the heather, his scrapings on the bare hillocks were new and numerous, his spoor was on every path, and the young trees which he had ruined were as plentiful as fungus. Twice in the early morning, when nearing his lordship's old haunts, I heard the loud raucous bark of a roe, and the klip-klip, bump-bump of its heels; but

that was after the red dawn had come and the dazzling sun shot its slanting rays through the great wood, so that I could not see well ahead, nor tell if the form threading along through the trees was that of a buck or doe.

My lord and I were, however, destined to meet once again; but the fates decreed that the day of meeting should be the Sabbath. O my lord Buck, what kind fortune is yours! For what fate are you destined?

My brother, a friend who had never seen a buck, and I took a walk one Sunday afternoon to visit a loch on the hill which had lately been stocked with trout. We lay for a long time in the heather watching the fish rise, and finding the hour, when we rose to go, was later than we had imagined, we took a short cut back through the big fir-woods, which short cut led us through my lord's domain. Our friend was particularly anxious to see a good buck, so I led the way first by a track where I happened to know a nice beast was often to be seen, but of course on that day he was invisible. Proceeding homewards, we entered a little valley to the east of the part of the wood that my lord was supposed to have selected as his own, and where I had not seen a roe that season. As we came out at the far end, there, lying down on the slope before us, was my lord himself. He must have seen us before we saw him, but had allowed us to approach to within sixty or seventy yards. We all

three stood still gazing at him in rapt astonishment, while he gazed inquiringly back at us, with a look which said, "Is not the Sabbath my own to rest?" Then he rose, and with two loud sharp barks disappeared over the hill. I have never seen him since. I sought him many times, but his powers of evasion were superior to mine of pursuit. At times I almost wondered if he was not some uncanny phantom, the ghost of a great buck of the Pleistocene Age. But no, it is he whom I knew from babyhood, grown now to be a great lord of the forest, and a master of woodcraft. Are not the marks of his horns on every sapling within his domain? Everywhere there is evidence of a material body,—and of mischief and temper. I

feel practically certain that the shed horn on the table beside me is one that I once saw gracing my lord's noble brow, and that the "velvet" in the drawer was stripped by himself from the horns he carried last spring. He is just a cunning, cunning old buck. Whether we may ever meet again seems doubtful. Circumstances have made it unlikely from my point of view. But if he is not to belong to me, after knowing and studying him for so long, I can only wish that he may go scot-free all his days. His grace is his own, his charm perhaps that of the fairies. Who has ever shot a buck that he saw initiated in the bewildering turns and doubling of the fairies' ring?

HUGH M. WARRAND.

ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.

VII. "POTTERING."

"WELL, if that place is held, it would take Lord Bobs and the 'Grand Army' three days to turn it," and the brigadier dropped his glasses to the full length of their lanyard.

The brigade, doing advance-guard to the whole concentration, had crossed the great prairie which lies north of Houwater, and the covering cloud of mounted *éclaireurs* was already disappearing into the shade of the mountain fastness in front of us. The giant outcrop of volcanic rock which is known as Minie Kloof rises, with that directness peculiar to the vast South African tableland, sheer from a prairie as level as a billiard-table. A succession of rocky flat-topped parallelograms, featureless save for the one sealed pattern of nature's architecture of the veldt. To the nomadic traveller and man of peace, landmarks as barren and bare as the great ironstone belts of Northern Africa, which constrain the power of the unwilling Nile until she surges in angry cataract through such niggard opening as they will allow her. To the man of war, a veritable Gibraltar; a maze of possibilities in defence; a stupendous undertaking in attack, an undertaking which will brook neither error nor miscalculation, and from which nature has eliminated much of the element of chance from the

one side to place it to the credit of the other. Of such a kind were our Colenso, Magersfontein, Stormberg, and Spion Kop heights. You at home at your ease, taking in from the map in a second a perfunctory impression of the topography, which it would take a cavalry brigade half a day to verify, talk glibly of turning this position and outflanking that. Know ye that the lateral problem, which in the pink and green of the atlas would appear so simple, may be for miles a gridiron of parallel and supporting positions. That the well-considered turning movement put in motion at the first streak of dawn may be, and probably will have become, a plain and simple frontal attack by sunrise, through circumstances that no man, not even a Napoleon himself, could foresee or control. Then this being given, why not deal leniently with such men as have served you well, and who may be trusted to profit by experience dearly purchased? but the other class, the man who has prostituted the fighting excellence of the British soldier in the shock of war by appealing to the chances of war, without effort on his own part—why, it is your duty to destroy him: your bitterest strictures even will not meet the punishment such a one deserves.

"If a life insurance agent

was to turn up now, I should take him on!" And the brigadier had every cause for anxiety, for the under-features of Minie Kloof could swallow a thousand men, and still leave a mocking enemy in possession of the salients. Troop after troop of Dragoons broke into extended order, and spread away to either flank. The front became wider and wider, and yet no rifle-shot. The main body and the guns halted and waited, momentarily expecting to hear that intonation of the double echo, which in a second would change the whole history of the day. But it never came. The little brown specks, which had vanished into the shadow of the mountain, commenced to reappear amongst the stunted vegetation on the crests. At first it needed strong glasses to distinguish the moving bodies from the clumps of blurred bush-shadow. Then out twinkled that little star of light which means so much to the general in the field. Gaily it caught the rising efforts of the sun, and threw to brigadier and staff the welcome news that the summit of Minie Kloof was clear.

"Thank Providence for that! we will be in Strydenburg to-night," and the brigadier cantered on into the pass while the main body of his command moved leisurely after him towards the natural fastness. It must have been from places on the great South African tableland such as this that Rider Haggard drew his inspirations to invent the hid-

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den kingdoms of Central Africa—charming rock-bound empires familiar to us all. How many will there be who have trekked through and through the new British colonies, and not been struck with the many mountain-locked valleys which abound! Valleys as fertile and pleasant as any in the legends of fairy tale; or, to be less fanciful in simile, as bright in being and as difficult of approach as Afridi Tirah in early autumn. Such a valley we found within the outer barrier of Minie Kloof. A valley small in its proportions, it is true, but none the less fertile. A dainty brook of crystal clearness gave life to the barren hillsides. The silt of a thousand years of summer torrents had furnished each niche and recess with a mould Goshen-like in its richness. Here, amongst luxuriant groves of almost tropical splendour, nestled the inevitable farmstead,—a white residence which had once possessed some architectural beauty, and an outcrop of barns and subsidiary mansions unpretentious in design, squalid in arrangement. The staff of the New Cavalry Brigade dismounted before the farmer's door and called for refreshment. For the moment one possessed the mental vision of a pink-cheeked milk-maiden—the panel-picture of civilised imagination—short of skirt, dainty in neck and arm, symmetrical and sweet in person and carriage. It is of such that the thirsty soldier dreams. The vision came. A slovenly hack from the kitchen obeyed

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the summons. With dirty hands she thrust a still dirtier beaker of milk upon us, and spat ostentatiously to emphasise the spirit of her hospitality. It takes much to stifle the honest thirst of war, but this was more than human nature could support, and the uninviting bowl passed round the staff untouched until it reached the less fastidious signallers. Five minutes at the crystal brook was worth all the ministrations of Dutch milkmaids.

It then became necessary to seek for information. It was a barren field of search. The surly men-folk of the sordid dwelling lounged out and met all inquiry with studied insolence. Even the Tiger could make no headway. He was met with recriminations. The Dutchmen recognised him as a neighbour, and ill disguised their disapprobation of his present circumstances. Information was at a deadlock, though in reality there was little to be learned. The brigadier halted just long enough to water the horses, and then it was forward again for the last climb over Minie Kloof.

It was slow work. The scouting of an outcrop of mountain by cavalry is always slow work, especially if that cavalry is under an officer who will have the work done well. But like all things, good or bad, it came to an end, and as the autumn sun grew vertical, the head of the column passed down into another great plain which sinks northwards into the Beer Vlei.

"Thank Providence the 'push' was not stuck up in that place,"

said the brigadier as he halted to watch the waggons down the last incline. "If old man De Wet is to be at Strydenburg to-night, with Britstown as his objective, we should have had him here to-morrow morning. I have only seen a worse country in the colony down Calvinia way. That was the most deceptive playground that I was ever inveigled into. But it was as deceptive to 'brother' as it was to us. Both sides lost themselves about twice every half-hour. Hostile pickets and outposts constantly rode into one another. I remember one night we had just settled down in camp when in rode three Boers. They came up to the lines of one of my scallywag corps with utmost unconcern—halted in all good faith right up against the horse-lines. 'What commando is this?—is it Judge Hertzog's?' A Natal corporal was the man nearest to them, and he was a quick-witted fellow. He slipped back the 'cut off' of his rifle as he answered, 'I guess not—but there is our commandant over there. You had best go and ask him whose commando it is; but you must just hold your hands above your head before you speak to him. He is a peculiar man, our commandant!' The men surrendered to him without a murmur, and seemed to think it was a good joke. But I daresay three months of a Bellary sun in the Shiny has caused them to change their opinions."

The column swung out into the great dry Karoo prairie. It was a comfortless trek.

Earth and sky seemed to have forgotten the rain of preceding days; or it may have been that the storms which had distressed us had been purely local, for we had struck a great waterless plain which showed not the slightest sign of moisture. The shuffling mules and lumbering waggons churned up a pungent dust; a great spiral pillar of brown cloud mushroomed out above the column; no breath of air gave relief from the vertical rigour of the sun; the great snake-like column sweated and panted across the open, reporting its presence to every keen-sighted Dutchman within a radius of fifteen miles.

We have seen the beauties of the Karoo; but we cannot blind ourselves to its defects, for they are more numerous than its beauties. At its best it is a great stagnant desert, studded here and there with some redeeming oases. Its verdure smacks of the wilderness. Stunted brown and grey, the heather from which these rolling steppes take their name is stranger to the more clement tinge of green, which is the harbinger of a soil less sapless. Yet a peculiar fascination militates against a general condemnation of the pitiless Karoo. One cannot altogether banish from one's mind the memories of a summer night upon those wastes. Those of you who have laboured in the desert of the Egyptian Soudan will realise what is meant—can feel as we feel towards the veldt of the Karoo. There is in that mysterious, almost uncanny, fascination of those

cool nights which succeed a grilling day a something which you always look back upon with delight. What this influence is, you can never precisely say; but it is impossible to forget it. . . .

At midday the New Cavalry Brigade came to a halt at some mud holes, which furnished sufficient clayey water of the consistency of gruel to allow the sobbing gun-teams and transport animals to moisten their mouths. Water for the men there was little, except the pittance which they were allowed to draw from the regimental water-carts. Neither was there shade from the merciless sun. The six inches of spare Karoo bush, though it served as a nibble for the less fastidious of animals, was useless either as bed or shade; other vegetable growth there was none within sight. Men crawled under waggons and water-carts if they were fortunate enough to find themselves near them, or, unrolling their blankets, extended them as an awning, and burrowed underneath. The oppression of that still heat! Fifty yards away the atmosphere became a simmering mirage; the outposts lost all semblance of nature's form, and stood out exaggerated in the middle distance as great blurs of brown and black. But it is only a passing inconvenience. In an hour or two the strength of that great, fiery, pitiless sun will be on the wane; if it were otherwise, then, indeed, would the Karoo be a desert. So you doze—it is too hot to sleep—and thank Fortune that you

have not to march during the furnace hours of the day. And as you doze, parched and sweating, a little blue-grey lizard pops out from beneath the cart beside you, and, climbing gingerly up the stem of a solitary karoo-bush, surveys you with great, thoughtful, unblinking eyes. He is a complacent little beast, of wonderful skin and marking; and if it were not for the palpitation of his white waistcoat, it had been difficult to say he lived. You wonder if he too feels the heat. You think he does; for he opens his pink maw and sways his sprig of heather, to make for himself that breeze in the still air for which you are panting. You close your eyes, and smile to think that such a little thing as a karoo-blended lizard can interest you. A sound catches your ear: it is the upbraiding note of the bustard. Again and again you hear it. A covey of these birds must have been raised. As the clatter of their cry dies away, you distinguish the muffled strokes of a galloping horse. This is significant. No man in his senses would gallop in this heat unless his mission was serious. Nearer and nearer comes the horseman. You hate to move, though you hear the rapid breathing of the horse and the complaints of chafing leather.

"Where is headquarters?" demands a voice in authority.

Your dream and rest is over; for are you not the general's flunkie? You jump to your feet.

"Where have you come from?"

Orderly (as he hands in a written message). "From the officer commanding the advance-guard." The message runs: "Patrol on left front reports large force of Boers, estimated 500 strong, to be behind the rise three miles to the right of the solitary flat-topped kopje on our left front. Patrol has fallen back upon me."

This information is laid before the brigadier, who is half asleep under the mess-cart.

Brigadier. "How far is the flat kopje from us?"

Intelligence Officer. "About four miles, sir."

B. "Intervening country?"

I. O. "Flat as a polo-ground, sir."

B. "Oh, send out a troop to get touch with them. I'll bet it's only a flock of ostriches or a mirage. Tell the troop not to get compromised if they should find Boers in greater strength than themselves. Hold another troop and the pom-pom in readiness to support, if there should be anything. But it's not reasonable that there should be 500 Boers so near us at this hour. It is too late for our Houwater friends, and too early for old man Christian."¹

I. O. "Very good, sir. . . ."

Almost immediately upon the despatch of the troop, the main body of the co-operating command marched up to the clay pools. The two generals met to discuss the situation. The meeting of generals in the field nearly always lends itself to the

¹ Christian de Wet.

picturesque. We know that it is a favourite theme for the artist's brush. And even in this utilitarian age, when the genius of man has shorn war of much of the panoply with which the calling of arms is associated in peace, there is something attractive in the communion of great soldiers in the field. The glory of war is not all cock-feathers and steel scabbards. In fact, the brilliant colours which blend so well with the pasture-green and brick-red of Europe would offend the eye if grouped upon the russet veldt—would seem as incongruous as a flamingo perching upon a hay-rick. It is an interesting picture. The two generals standing together a little apart from their staffs, which mingle in friendly intercourse. The lines of dismounted orderlies holding the horses from which the officers have just dismounted. The senior general is a tall spare man, just overlapping the prime of life. It is more than the powdered dust that makes his moustaches appear so fair. He is a man careful of personal appearance. From head to foot his uniform of modest brown fits him as would a glove—to borrow from the sayings of a fair cousin across the Atlantic,—the fit of everything is so perfect that it looks as if he had been melted and poured molten into a karki casing. The sombre dirt colour is relieved by the scarlet and gold upon his peaked cap and collar, and the long string of kaleidoscopic colour on his breast which speaks of many tented fields—and maybe as many

"fields of cloth-of-gold," for it does not take war alone now to decorate the breast, or to bind spur-straps across the instep of a knight. The brigadier stands in contrast to his senior. He is as tall a man, more commanding in carriage, but of very different temperament and gait. It is no studied negligence which has arranged the careless inconsistency of his dress. It is but the mind speaking through the person. He wears nothing that has cost a tailor a minute's thought to shape. His staff cap is set askew; his badges of staff distinction have obviously been sewn into position by some unskilled craftsman—probably his soldier servant. His tunic tells its own story of two years' campaigning in the rough; while the Mauser pistol strapped to the nut-brown belt which Wilkinson designed to carry a sword, speaks eloquently of the wearer's appreciation of the latter weapon as part of a general officer's service equipment. But as you look at the two—the one dandy and smart, the other rough and workmanlike—you can feel the personality of the junior, while the senior means no more to you than a clothier's model. This may not convey much meaning to the average layman. But men—illiterate, uncultured, fighting men—see and appreciate all this, and it means much to them. Know, therefore, that there is no keener judge of human character and human mind than the cherub of the gutter. It is from these guttersnipe, grown into men, that the fighting ranks of the great British army are filled.

The generals were discussing the situation, as far as their respective staffs could discern from their speech and attitude, amicably enough, though the brigadier was pressing some point. In reality he had renewed his protest against his senior's decision of the morning, and was endeavouring to influence him into a change of policy and plan. But the stern usage of the service decrees that the public convenience should be ordered by the man whose name ranges first upon the Army List schedule, and that the junior should press his arguments in deferential rather than aggressive language. But by dint of argument, and some short reference to the senior members of the staff, a compromise was arrived at in order to meet the wishes of the brigadier.

General. "I tell you that I don't like it; neither do I see any object in the move. After the handling which he has had from Plumer, Prieska can be the only line open to De Wet."

Brigadier. "But all my information is in an opposite direction, sir. It distinctly——"

G. "I don't think that your information is worth much. What can that boy know about it? He has been gulled by all the old wives' fables on the line of march."

B. "Well, sir, leaving De Wet out of the question—I have been promised a convoy at Strydenburg, and I have yet to pick up my brigade. A squadron of the 21st Dragoon Guards and the whole of the Mount Nelson Light Horse, which Plumer has not assim-

ated, is now straining every nerve to catch me up."

G. "When do you meet your convoy, and how far behind you are your details?"

(Now the brigadier had invented the convoy on the spur of the moment. It was true that he had been promised a convoy, but that promise had not indicated Strydenburg as the rendezvous. But seeing that he had scored a point he turned at once to the Intelligence officer.)

B. "When is our convoy due at Strydenburg?"

Intelligence Officer. "Possibly to-morrow evening, sir. The day after to-morrow at the latest." (Luckily the Intelligence officer had been following the conversation, and the answer came glibly enough.)

G. "H'm, that places another complexion upon it. But it is suicidal, reckless, to allow convoys to meander about the veldt in this inconsequent manner. What about your details?"

(The brigadier having struck a "lead," had wasted no time in figuring out his estimates.)

B. "Well, sir, I would suggest that you let me halt here for to-day. My details are just one day behind me now. They will catch me up to-morrow. In the meantime I will send a strong patrol—a reconnaissance rather—into Strydenburg, starting this afternoon, pick up the convoy, after which I will join you at any point you may select. I shall then be a useful fighting body; now I am only a gun escort!"

G. "Yes, yes, it would be dangerous for either you or your details to be wandering

about in this disturbed country alone. I agree with you, Colonel; but you must allow that in view of the present circumstances it would be inadvisable for us to be caught in detail."

One cannot blind oneself to the fact that all this is very childish. But then the man who undertakes life in the army must be prepared to be a schoolboy to the end of his service. It ill becomes a brigadier or any officer wearing his Majesty's uniform—as the expression goes—to practise small deceptions even to bring about a situation calculated to be for the public convenience. Yet what loophole remained to the brigadier to have acted otherwise. For reasons which are evident from his conversation, his senior had determined not to recognise him as an independent force, but to hug him until all danger real or imaginary was past. It is the trammels of discipline such as this that break the hearts of the stalwarts in our service, and rack the national war-chest to the bottom. Can you blame the brigadier, alive to the pressing exigency of the situation, when, having exhausted the man-to-man arguments of common reason, he descended to the practice of a subterfuge to defeat the purpose of a man whose only object appeared to be to satisfy his own personal peace of mind? What other course was open to him? Yet we doubt if the senior was conscious of the futility of his direction. He had one object in view. He was possessed with a single desire, which was

to avoid disaster. In its limited sense his action was laudable enough; but what would the owner of a racehorse say to the jockey who, after having ridden a sound horse in a race, volunteered the information that he had never extended his mount out of consideration for its sinews? The care of the jockey is parallel to that of fifty per cent of the men who have led columns in this war—except that there has been no judge in the box to balance the merits of each case. The judge has been far away in Pretoria, and the jockey has furnished his own estimate of the running. . . .

So the New Cavalry Brigade remained outspanned by the mud-holes, while the other column passed through it and bore away in search of the Prieska Road. The rearguard of the moving force was brought up by a Colonial corps, which had originally been raised in Natal by the brigadier of the New Cavalry Brigade. Of course the *personnel* in the ranks had long since changed. Changed, be it said with regret, for the worse. But there was still remaining a small percentage of the original stock—stock that had been second to none. As the rearguard passed through, a great burly corporal cantered up to the packing-case table at which the staff of the New Cavalry Brigade had just sat down to lunch, shouting, "Say, where is the ole man?"

The brigadier rose with a smile.

Corporal. "I heard that you were here, sir, and I couldn't go by without speaking. Lord, what a sight for sore eyes it is

to see you again!—if there were only more like you. (*Then extending his hand.*) Come, sir, put your hand right here—it is a good day's work to have again shaken hands with a man?" And then the man was off in a cloud of dust. But it had been an interesting and instructive incident. Without a doubt the man was Yankee; but he had served all through the Natal campaign, from Willow Grange to Bergendal, and his honest appreciation of his old chief almost brought tears to our eyes, and was of more value than all the ribband and tinsel that a crowned head can bestow.

"That," said the brigadier, "is one of the finest men, amongst many fine men, whom I have enlisted. I was recruiting for my 'push' down in Durban. I used to go and get the fellows off the ships as they came in. That fellow came over with a man who was running a cargo of mules. I well remember when I broached the subject to him. His answer was characteristic: 'Say, colonel, what do you want us for? Is it for a straight scrapping with Boers, or is it to meander about as a town garrison?' 'If you join me you shall be "scrapping" in a week from to-day.' 'Will you give me your hand on that, colonel?' I acquiesced, and straightway was able to enlist practically the whole ship's company—and I never want to command a better lot. Did I ever tell you about the Boer spies? Well, in the early days of recruiting in Natal several Dutch agents were enlisted.

They were paid by the Transvaal to enlist in British corps. When we got to Mooi river one of these men was discovered—recognised as an ex-Pretorian detective. That corporal came to me and volunteered some advice. 'You prove him a spy, colonel, and then turn him over to us; you won't have any more spies after that.' I had the suspect up. There was not a shadow of doubt about his identity, so I just said to the sergeant-major, 'This man is your property—the fair name of the corps is in your keeping; there's a convenient donga over there!' I never saw the man again, nor did I ask what happened to him; but this I do know, that on the self-same evening five men came to me and asked to be allowed to resign. They came with faces as white as the coat of that mare over there. 'Yes,' I said as I looked at them, 'you may go. You leave for the good of all concerned, yourselves included.' And since that day I was never troubled by the enlisting of Dutch agents." . . .

"The best laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,"

and the dust of the column moving towards the Prieska Road was still hanging over the horizon when a staff-officer came galloping back to the New Cavalry Brigade. He brought written instructions to the brigadier which nullified for ever the Strydenburg scheme. "The G.O.C. directs the O.C. the New Cavalry Brigade to remain halted until he is joined by such details as are following him along the Britstown

Road. As it is essential that the pass over Minie Kloof should be kept clear pending the arrival of the aforementioned details, the G.O.C. directs that the proposed reconnaissance to Strydenburg be abandoned, and the troops which would have been used for the reconnaissance be sent to hold Minie Kloof. As soon as the New Cavalry Brigade is complete, it will follow with all speed upon the direct road to Prieska. Under no circumstances are other arrangements to be made."

The occasion was not opportune for an expression of the brigadier's feelings, but his silence was eloquent. There was no hope for it: it was a written order from a senior, and we had no choice but to obey.

It is said by some that Christian de Wet is the best general that the war produced from the ranks of our enemy. It is not our present intention to debate upon this subject; but this much can be said with confidence, that he has been the most fortunate of leaders. On every occasion in which he has been hard pressed, when to all intents and purposes he has found himself at the end of his tether, the pendulum of fortune has favoured him in its swing. Often enough he has saved his skin through the culpable stupidity of his pursuers. But even when he has almost been cornered by the very best of leaders and men that the British Empire can produce, the law of chances has stood by him. A meddling contradictory telegram from headquarters, a thunderstorm or a swollen

river, has times without number saved the slippery commandant at the eleventh hour. Take the present instance. It subsequently proved that if the brigadier had, as he intended, moved upon Strydenburg, and arrived there on the same day that he was directed by his superior officer to stand fast and hold the Minie Kloof, he would have arrived at his goal practically simultaneously with the guerilla chieftain. The New Cavalry Brigade would have borne down upon the little Karoo hamlet, fresh and in the full spirit of men new to war and "spoiling for the fight"; men just sufficiently blooded in their preliminary skirmish to have confidence both in themselves and in their general, and—and this is the exasperating nature of the story—while the British troopers would have ridden robustly into battle, De Wet and his following were in no condition to receive them. Unprepared for the arrival of fresh troops, spoiled of guns, train, and ammunition, kicked and harried by the gallant Plumer's tenacity, riddled and torn by Nanton's armoured trains, harassed by Heneker and Crabbe, panting for rest, they would have been no match for blood-seeking dragoons and a Horse Artillery battery that had been studying range-finding in South Africa ever since the battle of Magersfontein. All we can do is to shrug our shoulders and say, "The pity of it," while we pay the extra twopence in the income-tax which our confidence in effete leaders, and disinclination

to recognise, and make soldiers recognise, that our army is a national institution, has cost us.

It so happens that in war the rank and file know little of what is taking place, and, one is inclined to add, care less. Consequently those in the brigade who had no knowledge of the state of affairs existing with regard to Strydenburg were delighted at the prospect of a halt. At this period of the campaign halts were rare, and men looked to them in much the same spirit as the average householder in England looks to a spring cleaning, since, provided there is water, an "off afternoon" will allow of a little of the cleanliness which hard trekking renders impossible. The Dragoon Guards had not been long enough in the country to feel the necessity of a thorough overhaul of their linen. But the Horse gunners were old soldiers, and as soon as the intended halt became common knowledge the men stripped the shirts off their backs and indulged in the luxury of sand-baths where water was not available. This may appear a simple operation, but those who have campaigned long upon the veldt will know that a change of clothes exposes not the least of "the horrors of war."

But, halted or moving, there is no cessation of trouble and anxiety for the staff of any unit engaged in active service, and when the brigadier issued his orders to meet the instructions

of his superior officer, his acting staff-officer discovered that the column was two troops short. One troop had been missing ever since the first day out from Richmond Road, the other had lost itself that morning in Minie Kloof. This may sound absurd, but it is not an isolated incident; and if we are to believe the evidence of those who marched with the "Grand Army" into Bloemfontein, it was not a matter then of troops that were missing, but fifty per cent of the whole army, and so badly missing at that, that it took the quartermaster-general's department a fortnight of solid labour to definitely find that fifty per cent of the lost army. The inexperienced youth could get no help from his brigadier. Since the arrival of the message from the main column, that officer had not been approachable. But with the aid of the good-natured gunner major and the opportune return of the troop which had been detached in the morning, as the brigadier had surmised, on a wild-goose chase after a mirage, it was possible to apportion some sort of a force capable of holding a salient in Minie Kloof without totally denuding the camp of adequate fighting strength. But it is on occasions such as these, when isolated detachments are scattered broadcast, that disaster is courted. Luckily it is only once in a hundred times that the enemy has been in a position to accept the free gifts offered to them.

(To be continued.)

DOGS OF A SORT.

AN omnivorous appetite, a plethora of bad language, a deep and sincere affection for Number One—are they to be regarded in the light of virtues? If not, then virtue, I fear, Moroo had none. Nor again had he many positive or at least actively objectionable vices. Nay rather, his intense and grotesque ugliness, his whimsical disposition, the unfailing readiness with which he lent himself to be made a fool of on every possible occasion, were so many points in his favour.

As to his appetite, then, which formed a full chapter of the history of a not uneventful life. He was given to me by a washerwoman who used to get up shirts and collars rather well, but drew the line at exercising her art upon Moroo. As he abstained on principle from personal ablution, he was about as dingy and unkempt a specimen of white poodle as ever walked on four legs. He had come into the washerwoman's possession as a sort of payment in kind of a bad debt, a matter of five pounds or so. And the worthy woman having caught her hare, then sat down, not to cook it, but to wait till a customer came along. For a poodle, like a preference share, might be supposed to have a market value. But alas! people in our village here employ a much readier method of getting hold of a dog, or a pig, or a duck, or a fowl than by paying. For they commonly practise a

policy of annexation. No one, however, seemed desirous of even annexing Moroo, and the washerwoman presently found that the cost of his licence and the pleasure of feeding him threatened to make the bad debt carry one hundred per cent interest in the wrong direction.

"Will you have him, sir?" she said to me one day. I hesitated.

"He'll eat anything!" she added, by way of recommendation. On the strength of this I took him at once, and he never belied his character.

Nothing in the way of food ever did come amiss to that dog,—not the richest cake, the strongest cheese, the cat's meat, the garbage in the pig-bucket, or even a brand-new leg of mutton. The last certainly did not come out of our larder. Whence it came no member of my household knows to this day. But one morning, having noticed that Moroo and a collie puppy were extraordinarily busy and highly excited, I opined that some mischief was afloat, and, watching them, made the discovery that they were partners in an uncooked leg of mutton. Which of the pair had stolen it was an open question, though her superior activity and love of mischief rather pointed to the collie as the actual thief, and Moroo as the "fence"; but they went shares in the trouble of burying it, and Moroo eventually ate it—*voilà tout*.

In addition to sundry unauthorised snacks, as I may call them, Moroo managed to get a share of six meals at least besides his own dinner, being a regular and importunate visitant at every regular meal, both in our dining-room and the servants' hall, and filling up odd chinks by periodical attacks on the pig-bucket. It is hardly to be wondered at, then, that he suffered from chronic dyspepsia, and occasionally used language which — *mutatis mutandis* — was worthy of a gouty invalid in the Georgian era. At a certain period of each day—i.e., between eleven and one, when meals were temporarily off—it was his common habit in fine weather to sit down by the front gate, and attract the attention of passing dogs by prolonged whining. Any stranger who, attracted by the sound, stopped to pass the time of day, then had the pleasure of hearing some plain home truths about his own personal appearance, moral character, and everything else connected with him. If one might judge from the transports of rage into which the animal on the wrong side of the gate was commonly driven, nothing in the way of vituperation came amiss to Moroo, and I am convinced that each newcomer was informed that not only he himself was outside the pale of civilisation, but that his female ancestors up to the third and fourth generation were no better than they should be, and his male progenitors if possible

worse. That was a real fool of a dog which, goaded into positive fury, thrust its nose under the gate. For this was the very thing which Moroo was evidently playing up for, and the nipping of the aforesaid nose being safely accomplished, and acting on him like a sherry and bitters, he would trot back to the house in better heart for the next meal.

Never, under any circumstances, did I know Moroo study any one's comfort or amusement but his own. Accident, however, coming to the rescue of incapacity, and unwillingness to oblige, often rendered him involuntarily amusing. For, having just sufficient sagacity to discover that other dogs in the establishment were rewarded for doing tricks by biscuits, Moroo rose to the situation and professed a desire to become a trick-dog.

Here are two of his best and most classical tricks. After watching two collies, excellent jumpers, clear my stick at a considerable height, Moroo, by loud barking and general display of excitement, signified his intention of entering the lists and showing how the thing really should be done. The stick was accordingly held up, and Moroo, taking a tremendous run, after two or three baulks and false starts, would gallop furiously—underneath, and then clamour for his biscuit! If the stick was held a foot off the ground, he would blunder over it somehow; at six inches he would actually clear it.

"Trust—paid for!" he played

on a principle of his own, sitting during "trust" with the air of a martyr and a bit of biscuit on the end of his nose; and at "paid for" just moving his head sufficiently to dislodge the biscuit, and gobbling it up greedily when it fell on the floor. Catching the morsel before it reached the ground he evidently regarded as a work of supererogation. He grew so fond of playing the game that I had to economise my biscuits, and presently found that by the addition of a little butter and gentle pressure, which caused the biscuit to stick to his nose even after the normal shake of the head, I could make one bit do service for half an hour.

"Trust, Moroo—paid for!"

A shake of the head was followed by a prolonged search for the biscuit, still on the top of his nose, under every table and chair in the room. Finally the idea would possess his soul that one of the other dogs had taken a mean advantage of him and eaten his biscuit, and he would spend several minutes in calling them most awful names, which rather amused them than otherwise. At length he would retire in high dudgeon to a corner of the room, presently to discover by accident that the biscuit was on his nose all the time. At the end of a fortnight or thereabouts he became partially aware of the fact that he was being made a fool of, and after shaking his head as usual, would scratch his nose with his paw before searching elsewhere for the biscuit. But when I

tried a variation of the game, by pressing the biscuit firmly on his nose and then quietly pocketing it, he was completely taken in again, and would spend an hour or more in searching for the imaginary treasure.

I have heard people who profess to be knowing about dogs declare that no other dog comes near a poodle in the point of intelligence. Moroo, then, I imagine, must be numbered among the exceptions that prove the rule. For, apart from a natural gift for looking after his own commissariat, I never found in him a glimmering of intelligence, and if he had any of that commodity he kept it religiously to himself. What an egregious fool he really was may be gathered from the fact that, if I stuck my stick into the ground, and then invited Moroo to inspect the hole, he would at once declare that there was a rat about, and spend the rest of the afternoon in digging. He never, to my knowledge, really did kill or wish to kill a rat, but he once wrecked a mouse-trap set in my wife's bedroom in pursuit of—the cheese!

In order, however, to preserve his character, I thought it as well to "poodle" him occasionally; and about once in every six months, when the weather out of doors was impossible, I amused myself for an hour or so by clipping and shaving him. He submitted to the operation patiently enough, knowing that the presentation of a biscuit was part of the performance. The clipping and

lathering he really enjoyed, the latter process seeming to exercise a soporiferous influence upon him. He would wake up and squeak in double-quick time later on if I happened to nick him with the razor; but the contemplation of the biscuit on the mantelpiece would restore his self-possession. We often talk of the "pink of humanity," but the pink of the dog Moroo, after a satisfactory shave, was of a far more pronounced type.

Now and again temporary fits of intense and most *exigent* affection for some one member of the household would overcome him. And as he preferred to utilise the powers of scent rather than of sight in recognising his friend for the time being, I have seen a stranger literally bound off his seat in alarm when Moroo came up behind him and sniffed audibly at his calves during his search for the person he wanted to talk to.

When we let our house, Moroo formed a part of the fixtures, and accepted the situation gracefully—so much so, indeed, that he more than once managed to induce the tenants to believe that he was an unappreciated and underfed animal. But though people used to pet him and fatten him up, I never had a subsequent application for his character with a view to a change of situation. As he once trotted manfully for two miles along the railway in pursuit of a train which was conveying the temporary object of his affections to our market-town, and on another occasion,

having been taken for a drive in a high dog-cart, went to sleep, and fell off the front seat into the road, his life was not entirely devoid of a healthy excitement. He died at a good old age, leaving, I fear, many enemies and no friends of his own species, and of the human race more who wondered why he had ever been born than of those who mourned his loss.

Roots, alias Pongo,—for he went by both names, though he answered to neither,—was a joint property dog. He belonged to a syndicate of twelve men, and my own share in the venture cost me half-a-crown. Like several of the other shareholders I took Pongo on the faith of a rather highly coloured description, much in the same way as a man takes a share in an Australian goldmine which may or may not exist. If there was no doubt that Pongo did exist, I will not pretend that many of us fell in love with our investment when we beheld it in the flesh. The original purchaser was the pioneer of a roving cricket team, who, having reached the rendezvous some hours before the rest of the side, had apparently wiled away his leisure time by bargaining for Pongo with a tipsy pedlar, who got by no means the worst of the deal. The cost price of the animal itself was 25s., the balance of the capital being invested in the purchase of an appropriate collar. The ceremony of taking out a licence was postponed till the end of the tour, when it was proposed that the

shareholders should draw lots for what in the prospectus was described as a valuable Russian retriever, the word "odoriferous" having been accidentally omitted. For all that I know to the contrary, Pongo may have been a Russian retriever, or again he may have been a Siberian boar-hound; but on one point I am absolutely certain—he was far and away the ugliest beast I ever clapped eyes on. Our umpire, a very dour man, almost threw up his engagement on the spot on hearing that Pongo was going to accompany the tour, and one or two of the shareholders were inclined to fall foul of our managing director.

"He's got an awfully good nose," said the latter, by way of puffing the concern.

"So've other folk as I knows on," growled the umpire; "I could wind him a mile or more."

Indeed the only occasion on which this important functionary condescended to give any advice in the matter of Pongo was when some shareholder had suggested that the creature would want some meals.

"Seems to me," quoth the umpire, "that a dog as can't look after himself at a cricket lunch ain't up to much."

If it may be inferred that a dog which can look after itself at a cricket lunch is "up to much," Pongo's real value must have been enormous. For the marvellous rapidity wherewith day after day he disposed of the scraps, bones, and general *débris* of a luncheon provided for some thirty people stamped him as

a champion eater—a second Benjamin, in fact.

Barring the fact that he had periodical fits of obtrusive and unappreciated affection, and an insane desire to fetch and carry anything portable, I cannot lay any definite charges of misbehaviour at Pongo's door. But somehow or other none of us loved as perhaps he deserved or desired to be loved, and the lavish manner in which eleven of the proprietors threw their shares on the market free gratis and for nothing at the end of the tour was nothing short of remarkable. The twelfth man had quitted us at the end of four days, having rashly pledged himself to fulfil a matrimonial engagement. He had only in the first instance joined us by way of having—to use his own words—a "final bust before being tied up."

It seemed to annoy our managing director not a little when he discovered that the shares in Pongo had fallen to so great a discount that there was no purchaser or even acceptor to the fore; but his annoyance did not take the form of either offering to refund our half-crowns or of volunteering to keep Pongo.

"Give him to Good" (the umpire), suggested some one. But that functionary on receiving the offer simply ejaculated, "'Ow much?" which was interpreted to imply that he would only accept the gift for a consideration, and most probably make away with the unhappy brute as soon as our backs were turned. An attempt to secure for Pongo the

vacant situation of yard-dog at our hotel having also failed, we were fairly at our wits' end, when the managing director made a happy suggestion.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he said, "we'll send him off to Tommy."

Tommy, it should be said, was the happy bridegroom.

"Do you mean as a wedding-present?" inquired some one.

"Ah, well, yes, I hadn't meant that exactly; but Tommy and Mrs Tommy have gone abroad for three months, and if we have Tommy's name and address engraved on the collar, and send Pongo off to Tommy's place, they'll take him in all right."

The proposition was carried *nem. con.*, and on the following morning Pongo was duly labelled and packed off to Kent. And for three months or more all of us breathed freely. But in November I—why I should have been pitched upon Heaven only knows—received quite a rude letter from Tommy, who evidently disliked entertaining Pongo almost as much as Mr Jawleyford objected to boarding and lodging Soapy Sponge.

"Am sending the brute off to you," was the postscript, and almost on the heels of the letter arrived Pongo and a bill of charges for his railway fare. I was in lodgings at Oxford at the time, and had no particular desire to keep a dog, and if a dog at all, certainly not Pongo. Fortunately the late managing director and sundry other members of the team were also in residence, and under the circumstances I felt justified in

bribing the railway porter to take the dog on to the managing director. The latter tumbled into the trap quite readily, paid the charges, and had Pongo deposited in a livery stable pending arrangements for his final disposal. At a meeting of as many of the shareholders as could be collected at luncheon that day, it was decided that the dog should remain at the livery stables for a week, that there should be a call of one shilling on the shares with a view to his support, and that the managing director should once or twice in the course of the week take him out for a walk, and, if possible, lose him. The arrangement worked admirably. Two days later, sitting at a window in the High Street, I was aware of a man, in whom I recognised a well-known Rugby master, faultlessly attired in every respect, but considerably embarrassed by the pertinacious attentions of Pongo, who, having been successfully lost by the managing director, had wisely made up his mind to adopt a new owner. Nothing that the wretched man could do in the way of attempting to shake off his follower had the slightest effect. Pongo behaved in all respects like a thoroughly trained, highly sagacious, and faithful animal. Did the involuntary owner step into a shop and remain there an unconscionable time? Pongo lay down placidly outside the shop, and greeted him with demonstrative affection on his re-appearance. Did the man aim

a backward kick at his attendant's head? The attendant simply avoided the kick, and wagged his tail to show that he appreciated the kindly notice.

The last view I had of Pongo in the flesh was as he trotted down the High Street in pursuit of a hansom in which his victim had finally taken refuge. But I am inclined to believe that the following advertisement, which appeared for two weeks in a local paper, had reference to him:—

FOUND.—A large black and very curly haired species of Retriever. If not claimed at once, will be sold to defray expenses.

Having perfect cognisance of Pongo's gastronomic performances, I can believe that there were expenses. But where, I wonder, were the purchasers?

Bob, red-headed, web-footed Bob, who was in my possession for six weeks, had all the capacity and intelligence to prove a perfect treasure for an owner who was not afflicted with unfortunate scruples as to the distinction between "meum" and "tuum." Indeed, had he resided in this village he might have been canonised. His warmest admirers—and their name was not legion—must have been content to admit that he was a thorough-paced mongrel, and that among his ancestry were numbered more plebeians than dogs of high-breeding or refined taste. Still there had been no lack of brains in the family, and I am inclined to think that a collie, a spaniel, and an otter-

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hound had severally something to say to his parentage, and transmitted to him a double portion of intelligence. From what source he inherited his knavish propensities is a moot-point; but he probably had natural instincts to help himself to his neighbour's property, as well as a professional education. Not even in the Artful Dodger would Fagin have found a more apt pupil. In the course of the first week of our acquaintanceship he presented me with a rabbit, a pair of baby's boots, and a garden trowel,—useful articles enough in their way, but probably of more value to their legitimate owners than to myself. It was pretty evident that he had been educated in the art of shoplifting by his late owners, a band of gipsies who had pitched their camp a few miles out of Oxford. When the encampment moved on, much to the relief of the neighbourhood, Bob, having, I believe, been arrested when out on a marauding expedition, had in some mysterious way fallen into the possession of the rector of the parish, who passed him on to me, warning me, however, that the dog was to be commended on the score of intelligence rather than of honesty. And he certainly showed fair promise of living up to his character.

Having no particular ambition to figure in the police-court either as accomplice or receiver of stolen goods, I invested in a muzzle, but the result was not entirely satisfactory. If the dog had earned half-pence, or at any rate the

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equivalent for half-pence, in an unmuzzled state, under the new conditions he came in for a goodly share of kicks, administered by irate or alarmed pedestrians, against whose calves he suddenly rammed his head vigorously, in the hope of rubbing off the muzzle. Matters came to a climax when he suddenly assaulted a short-sighted and short-tempered Don in our College porch after this fashion, on which occasion the kicks or their equivalent in language fell to my share. And on the same Sunday afternoon, when I took him out for a walk in the country, he signalled himself by a blind charge into the calves of a very fat old lady who was wending her way to church, and caused her to sit down violently on a very muddy footpath, and to use language which it was quite as well that her parson did not hear.

"I should get rid of that dog, old chap," sagely remarked the man who was walking with me at the time, and who, having aimed a self-defensive kick at Bob, was the indirect cause of the latest catastrophe; "he'll make you more enemies than friends, and he's not much to look at."

So, at the end of the term, I passed Bob on to my scout, who, being a bit of a sporting character, fancied that a dog which had once belonged to gipsies would also have some sporting instincts.

"He's worth his weight in gold, sir," the man said to me six months later, and looking at the matter from a scout's point

of view, I daresay he spoke the truth.

Nip, an Irish water-spaniel, was my guest only for a fortnight. He was not an all-round thief like Bob, but dealt exclusively in hats, and was not particular where he got them from, committing a highway robbery, not unaccompanied by violence, without the least compunction.

"Fetch a hat, Nip," and at the word of command Nip, who evidently appreciated the fact that a man's or boy's head was the proper place for a hat, would gallop off, and take forcible possession of the first hat he saw. Partly out of compassion for my neighbours, and still more because I did not want to enter into a wordy altercation myself, I only played the game with him myself in our own garden. But I was quite able to judge from the old gardener's remarks, when he found himself forcibly despoiled of his head-gear, that what was fun to Nip's owner, and possibly to Nip himself, was extremely provocative of bad language from the other party to the transaction.

Oscar, a brown English spaniel, who belonged to one of the cleverest men about dogs that I ever met, was true and honest in all his dealings, being always ready to fetch anything that he knew to be his master's property, but refraining from meddling with other people's goods. Like my dear old Betty, who, by the way, was one of his bosom friends, Oscar had some power of inference.

"Go and fetch my slippers, Oscar," said his master one day, after a muddy walk.

Oscar trotted off upstairs, and reappeared in a few minutes with one slipper.

"Go and fetch the other, you old fool!"

Oscar wagged his tail and hesitated. The order was repeated in a more peremptory manner, and off went Oscar, to return after an interval with a pair of clean socks.

"You old donkey!" ejaculated his owner, and Oscar, who disliked abuse, went and lay down in a corner of the room.

"I'll bet there is something queer about that!" said my friend, and he rang the bell.

"Has any one taken one of my slippers out of my room?" he inquired of the maid who answered the bell.

"Yes, sir, I have—it wanted a stitch in it." And Oscar's character was vindicated.

One other yarn about Oscar. His master and I were going out shooting at the beginning of the season, and Oscar was accompanying us. Just before we reached the scene of action, Oscar's master, one of the gentlest of men, called a halt, and producing a small dog-whip gave the poor beast a sound thrashing.

The dog howled murder, and I could not help feeling rather disgusted.

"What on earth had he done?" I inquired.

"Nothing," was the reply. "But I'll tell you what he would have done in another five minutes. He'd have had a fit. The fact of the matter is

that the poor old chap gets so little sport nowadays that when he sees my gun he is in such a state of suppressed excitement that he has a really bad fit unless I remember to give him a good hiding before we begin to shoot. I suppose that the pain acts as a sort of counter-irritation. Now you'll see that he will work well all day." And so he did.

Many years ago I was misguided enough to hold by the theory that a yapping terrier was a good guardian of the house, and that no well-organised establishment ought to be without a protection of the kind. A little experience convinced me that house-dogs of this description are more bother than they are worth. As an American writer once justly remarked, a Newfoundland dog, which is extremely useful in pulling a child out of a pond, is apt to lose its value if both pond and child are conspicuous by absence. In the same way, in the absence of a few tame burglars, the house-dog is shorn of its significance. I found, at any rate, that my house-dog, being short of work, slept placidly six nights in the week, and on the seventh, by way, I conclude, of keeping up his character, barked loudly two or three hours after I had gone to bed. Possibly a stray cat had called him names under the backdoor, possibly he had a nightmare, or it may have been that he barked out of sheer cussedness; but, apart from speculation as to causes, the effect of his ill-timed clamour

was that I had to get out of bed, and shiver downstairs to smack him. Since I discarded house-dogs I have slept more soundly. But I had a very unfortunate experience of two yard-dogs, rejoicing in the names of Niger and Barney, which arrived in rapid succession by way of guarding my hens. It is an open secret that any one in this part of the world who aspires to keep poultry has to be prepared for chronic raids, roast fowl being evidently a favourite dish at the various club entertainments. Finding that I was called upon to supply rather more than my fair share of contributions to these banquets, I wrote to a friend in Yorkshire, who generally has a few superfluous dogs in his possession. I got an answer by return of post: "I am sending you down Niger. He is no good as a retriever, as his mouth is too hard, but I should think he would make a good yard-dog."

Niger, a monstrous black retriever, arrived in due course, and was installed in the poultry yard, living in a tub, and having a sufficient length of chain to permit his ranging freely. He looked the part of fowl-protector to perfection, as he lay in his tub with his head on his fore-paws, keen and alert, and I am pretty certain that no extraneous party handled any of my fowls during his fortnight's guardianship. And yet there were certain mysterious disappearances, which I was totally unable to account for, until my eyes were rudely awakened to the fact that Niger's guardian-

ship was not wholly disinterested, it being his habit to take tithes from his unwary wards, concealing the fraud by bolting his victims, feathers and all. The discovery was due to the astute Alfred, who, having made it his practice to wile away stray minutes of his valuable time in talking to Niger, chanced one day to interrupt that lordly animal in the middle of a meal, and narrowly escaped demolition on his own account.

"Do yer know," he said to me, "as that there dawg of yours hates the 'ens?"

"Let him hate them, then!" I responded, not quite comprehending the situation.

"Oh! Well, if yer don't mind, I don't! But I shan't go agin him not no more. I wouldn't kep a dawg myself as hates the chickens, and he went at me and all!"

So grumbled Alfred, and I was yet groping in the lake of darkness.

"Why, does he hate you too, Alfred?"

"He very soon would ha' done, if so be as I 'adn't shifted. Come up at me wi' his mouth wide open and full o' feathers, as he 'adn't time to swaller 'em!"

"You don't mean to say that he eats the chickens, Alfred?" I exclaimed.

"Whoy, I said as he hate them, didn't I?"

We buried Niger that night, and I wrote off to my Yorkshireman and explained that I had found the dog's mouth too hard even for my liking.

"I am sending you Barney," came the answer. "He's a use-

less brute, but good-looking; he won't eat your hens, but will bark at night if any one is about."

And Barney, a large Irish water-spaniel, who in the eyes of a connoisseur may have been good-looking, but to my untutored eye wore the appearance of an amiable lunatic, might really have proved a safe guardian if he had not been either over-imaginative or over-conscientious; for, so far as I could make out, he never omitted to bark at intervals of ten minutes from midnight to cock-crow, and if he disturbed the slumbers of the poultry half as much as he did those of the household, the ill-used creatures must have been heartily relieved when I gave him away.

This being clearly one of the cases where the remedy is worse than the disease, I have latterly permitted my neighbours to exact the normal tribute from my poultry-yard without let or hindrance on my part.

To Rough, the first Dandie Dinmont I ever possessed, only a short space of life was granted. But he showed fair promise of being a most interesting companion, even though he never erred on the side of being over and above subservient to orders. He came to me as a tiny puppy, not much more clothed by nature than a half-fledged Cochinchina chicken, and for the first few nights after his arrival he slept all night on my chest. Later on, as his coat began to grow, he was promoted to a basket and a blanket of cotton-

wool; and even in his puppyhood he had a good deal to say to any animal, human or otherwise, who ventured to meddle with his basket, his bone, or anything else to which he had asserted his right of proprietorship. The force of character which he exhibited at a comparatively early age commanded the respect even of Poo, the house cat, which had ruled the roost until his arrival. Accustomed to have her own way in most things, Poo, whom nature had endowed with a vile temper, sharp claws, and great command of bad language, would, from sheer cussedness rather than hunger, swoop down upon the dogs when they were at their dinner, and defy them to touch a morsel of food until she had helped herself. On the very first day that Rough, being supposed to have left the nursery, was promoted to dine late like a grown-up dog, Poo made one of her periodical visitations, and was not a little annoyed to find that while the other dogs gave place to her, Rough went on eating.

"You ill-mannered little beast!" exclaimed Poo at last, and with that she boxed his ears, and in an instant found herself being violently hustled down the passage and out of the backdoor by an animal whose total indifference to bites and scratches was only equalled by his entire absence of reverence towards a lady old enough to be his grandmother. For the future Poo left Rough severely alone, and confined herself to calling him bad names from a safe emin-

ence. A few days after the cat's discomfiture, I was taking Rough out for a walk, and the little fellow was trotting along the road quite peacefully some twenty yards ahead of me, when he was suddenly and violently attacked by a mongrel terrier half as big again as himself, rolled over, and apparently pinned by the neck. A more wanton and unprovoked assault I never witnessed, and I was rushing to the rescue, when lo! in a moment Rough had extricated himself from an apparently hopeless situation, and with his shark-like jaws had literally bitten the other dog all over, winding up with a savage bite just above the root of the tail, which effectually closed the case for the plaintiff in the action. With a lamentable howl the terrier fled for his life, and Rough, with his tail high in the air, started in pursuit at his very best pace, some six miles an hour. As the other dog, to whom fear added wings, covered at least three yards to his one, the stern chase promised to be lengthy; but this did not appeal in the least degree to the plucky little pursuer, who kicked and struggled for all he was worth when I overtook him and picked him up in my arms. Alas! this rough-and-tumble encounter was only the precursor of many others to follow, and although my wife, to whom the dog was a constant and devoted companion, wept salt tears over his untimely death, I am inclined to think that the pleasure of taking him out for a walk was

more than counterbalanced by the attendant anxiety. For the companionship of a dog who takes its pastime in fighting with something double its own size is nearly akin to the chaperonage of a volcano.

Jock, a curly-coated retriever, whom I bred myself and gave away when he was two years old, turned out to be almost as good as he was good-looking, which is saying a great deal for him. He was excellently broken by a keeper in Hertfordshire, but shooting rarely came in my way, so that I was not sorry to find an appreciative owner for him. Once in September I enjoyed a day's shooting in his company, and up to luncheon-time no dog could have behaved better. A yeoman farmer, for whom I had done some small service, had insisted upon putting the shooting of his land at my disposal, and another man and I had had an excellent morning's sport. Somewhere about two o'clock a bountiful luncheon was sent out to us, and we sat down to it with some readiness after our long morning.

"Have a bit, old chap!" said my friend, throwing a fragment of meat to Jock, who had seated himself a few yards off. Jock sniffed at the proffered morsel with a supercilious air and then ate it, not in the least like a hungry dog, but rather with the air of one that did not want food at all, but thought it might hurt the donor's feelings if he refused it. He then quietly curled himself up and went to sleep.

"Rum dog, that!" exclaimed my friend. "He's not quite as hungry as I am, and—hullo, look at that pony!"

I looked, and saw that the pony which had brought out our luncheon, having been left to his own devices while the boy who had brought him and our game-carriers were discussing their luncheon at a respectful distance, had essayed the apparently impossible task of climbing the gate to which he was tied. The result had not been entirely satisfactory, as he had only succeeded in thrusting his forefoot over the top bar, and was now in imminent danger of breaking either his leg or his back. We flew to the rescue, and in certainly not more than five minutes succeeded, with the help of the men, in extricating the pony from his perilous position. When we returned to our food, Jock, we noticed, was lying exactly as we had left him, but, with the exception of some fruit, the whole edible portion of our lunch—bread, meat, sandwiches, cake, and cheese—had disappeared, and the dog was so gorged that he was useless for the rest of the day.

I think, then, on the whole, that I may award the prize for slyness, not devoid of humour, to my friend Jock. Moroo, capable of digesting seven meals a-day for a week on end, and open to be made a fool of at any hour of any day, takes highest honours for consistent gluttony and density of intellect. No animal that I have ever seen or heard of can com-

pete in the matter of restlessness with my daughter's pet, Miss Vixen, in reference to whom a maid devoted to dogs declared that Vic was a darling dog, but always made her head ache by perpetual motion on her own part, and keen observation of every movement made by her companion. And the palm of ingratitude must go to a very handsome and very cross-grained poodle I met in Ireland, which, having so far buried the hatchet with the local doctor as to submit for a whole month to his skilful treatment of a broken limb, so soon as it was pronounced to be convalescent, inflicted a savage bite on its late medical attendant. As I do not remember the animal's sex, I have spoken of "it" in the neuter gender; but a generally cantankerous and malevolent disposition seems to point to the possibility of an old maid disappointed in love.

Of strangers I do not think that any four-footed animal ever appealed to my sympathies quite as much as what I may call a beach-dog, at Eastbourne. Like my quondam friend Bob, he was a bit of all sorts in the matter of breeding, having some of the characteristic features of the collie, the retriever, and the spaniel. I imagine that he had an owner somewhere; but as the latter was never in evidence, my beach-dog was to all intents and purposes an independent member of society, and was hail fellow well met with any and every member of the human tribe who came to pass the time of day to him. Speak

to him, and he would wag his tail; pat him, and he would at once trot off, and presently return to deposit at your feet a lump of wood, an old boot, or any other common object of the sea-shore, and then, with speaking eyes and wagging tail, explain to you that he was ready to fetch and carry this or any other article from morning until sunset for your or his own amusement. Albeit that he was civil to all comers, he seemed to have an intuitive knowledge that old ladies and retired general officers, who abound at Eastbourne, and the owners of private property dogs, were not likely to respond to his advances. But the rest of mankind he apparently divided into two classes, possible and probable playmates,—a dog's boy, or a nurse with three or four toddling children to amuse, falling under the latter heading. The nurse and her charges were regarded as good for—we will say—half an hour's amusement at odd times, but a dog's boy—

i.e., a schoolboy sent to the sea-side for the holidays, unfettered by any present ties of companionship, and therefore open to any kind of mischief or amusement—was a veritable treasure-trove. The pair of idlers, boy and dog, would foregather in an instant, and fraternise on terms of perfect equality; and I could take leave of my four-footed acquaintance with the comforting conviction that he was amply provided for in the way of amusement and companionship for some hours to come. It must stand to the credit of the beach-dog that temporary prosperity never so far turned his head as to banish from his memory the fact that on occasion I had done my best to act as substitute for a more congenial companion. For even in the middle of a rollicking game with a dog's boy, if he saw me passing by, he would trot up to me, and thrusting a cold nose into my hand, would signify that I was heartily welcome to join the sport if I had had a mind that way.

CONCERNING CELESTIAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

IT is a matter of common knowledge that the enormous advances which have of recent years been made in various paths of astronomical research have been due very largely to the powers which the continued improvement of photographic processes have placed in the hands of astronomers. But there is an impression abroad that so much success has been achieved because the application of photography has made the art of observation comparatively simple and unlaborious. Such a view is, to say the least of it, a misapprehension of the case, and yet it has been suggested by more than one brilliant exponent of astronomic truth. Four years ago, at the ceremony of the dedication of a great American observatory to the cause of science, one of the greatest living astronomers referred picturesquely to the "photographic eye of one or more little telescopes" at the Harvard College Observatory, "all-seeing and never-sleeping policemen, that scan the heavens unceasingly while the astronomer may sleep, and report in the morning every case of irregularity in the proceedings of the heavenly bodies."

Now, the men who are working at celestial photography must feel that this way of putting the case is dangerously liable to misconstruction. One of them has indeed complained that such statements take away the glamour with which he likes

to think that an astronomer should be surrounded. The thought of the watcher sitting through long nights with his eye glued to the telescope invested with an air of romance an uncomfortable occupation; while there is even something ignoble in the idea of going to bed and leaving the senseless though sensitive photographic plate to explore the wonders of the heavens—the plate which registers with equal unconcern the rich fields of the Milky Way or the regions barren of stars which lie on the borders of the great tracts of nebulae; and even goes on foolishly trying to work when clouds have blotted out the sky. Fortunately for the picturesque side of the astronomer's life, there is very little truth in the latter picture. He cannot go to bed. Save in a few cases, which scarcely make an exception, his eye and hand are wanted to guide and control the work which his photographic telescope is doing. And to make it do its work well is a task which is not less anxious at the moment of observation, and requires beforehand vastly greater preparations, than in the old days of actual star-gazing.

For so soon as the photographic plate replaced the eye at the end of the telescope, there was a cry for greater perfection in the mounting of the telescope and for greater accuracy in the driving clockwork. Probably every one knows that if a

star has to be kept under examination in the telescope, the instrument must be driven by clockwork, to counteract the effect of the earth's rotation. What is not so well known is, that even if the clockwork can be adjusted exactly, the problem is only half solved. There are a number of small causes which modify in a complicated way the original simple problem. The changing refraction of the atmosphere as the star rises from the eastern and sinks towards the western horizon; small displacements of the telescope axis from its proper position; the slight bending of the tube as it turns over continually into new positions and redistributes the strains within it,—all combine to hinder an exact solution of the problem of following the star precisely in its nightly journey across the sky.

For visual observation one need scarcely trouble about these small irregularities. It is a matter of comparative indifference whether the star remains absolutely fixed in the field of view, or drifts very slowly across it. When the error has accumulated to a large amount it can be corrected at a jump, and things go on as before. But in photography it is a very different matter. The image of the star must not be allowed to wander about in the slightest degree over the sensitive film, or its picture will come out blurred and irregular. It was practically a new problem in telescope driving which had to be solved, if perfect pictures were to be obtained; and very beau-

tiful are the devices which have been used to secure the desired accuracy in the clockwork movement. The principle is much the same in all. Quite away from the telescope, and free from any disturbing influences which may affect its running, there is a pendulum which sends at every swing an electric current to the clock, and brings into play a mechanism which sets the clockwork right if it deviate by a very small fraction of a second from the regular swing of the pendulum. This is an improvement of a high order in telescope machinery, and its introduction has been brought about entirely by the demands of the photographer. So far so good. Instrument makers have been able to meet these demands, and the present-day driving clocks are practically perfect. At the expense of very great care and trouble in making them to start with, which is the instrument-maker's business, and in putting and keeping them in adjustment afterwards, which very soon turns perforce the astronomer into something of a mechanic, they can be made to run with almost any desired degree of nicety. And if the stars would only run their daily course as regularly there would be no more trouble, for the instrumental difficulties to which we have referred can with care be reduced to small proportions. But the stars will not run regularly. The refraction of the atmosphere displaces them to a degree which varies continually as

their height above the horizon varies, and so a motion of the telescope which follows the stars exactly in one part of the sky is quite wrong when they get to another. After the adjustment of telescope and clockwork have been made perfect,—far more perfect than was ever required in visual observation,—one is still left with a troublesome small inequality to deal with which will ruin a photograph absolutely.

It will be evident that when a man wants to obtain celestial photographs of high precision it is no case of going to bed and leaving the telescope to work sweet will, either its own or his. He requires to be very much awake to tackle the problem which is set before him, how to ensure that the image of the star is not wandering in a little path of its own upon the sensitive plate. What is required is to keep a continual watch upon it, and of course that cannot be done directly. But there are one or two ways of doing it indirectly. We can fasten two telescopes firmly parallel to one another, and by continual watching and constant correcting keep on the cross wires in one the central star of the field which is being photographed in the other. That plan avoids at least the danger of the stars running right away from their proper places on the plate, but it is at best a poor approximation to the desired end. By the nature of the case, a fault in the following cannot be detected until it has taken place, and by the time it is put right

the star images have already been falling for a few seconds on the wrong places on the plate, and some harm has been done. So serious is the result of even this very slight shift that attempts have even been made to dispense with this system of successive small corrections by hand, to calculate beforehand what the actual irregularities will be, and deliberately to make the telescope run irregularly to correspond. This is an aggravated case of working by faith, and to carry it out successfully is a matter of great difficulty. But we are entering upon a path which is strewn with thorny technicalities. Let it suffice to repeat what we have already said, that to obtain good star photographs which are fit to subject to the most accurate measurement is by no means the easy thing which we have sometimes been wrongly led to believe.

And when with great pains the star photograph has been secured, to what end will it lead? Not as a rule to the publication of a beautiful picture, crowded with stars gathered in streams and clusters, upon a background flecked with pale nebosity. That is the kind of photograph which is used to illustrate the text-books, and a very beautiful thing it is. But its beauty is a snare. It looks so amazingly rich for the very simple reason that a great many square degrees of sky have been crowded into a very small picture. It is as though every town, village, and hamlet were dotted in on a map of Great Britain a few

inches high. That would produce an exaggerated effect of over-population. And, be it noted, such a small-scale map would be of very little use if one wished to measure accurately the distance from village to village. The smallest distance to which one could measure on the map would correspond to a good many miles on the country roads. And so it is with those crowded star photographs which give so vivid a picture of the richness of the sky; they show that the heavens are densely crowded with stars. But they altogether exaggerate the case; and it is almost a pity that they are so constantly reproduced, for no one could be surprised if it were believed that they are the typical star photographs to obtain which the great photographic telescopes are erected.

Such is not the case. Almost the whole work of a great observatory consists in making accurate measurements of one sort or another, and they have been induced to set up large photographic telescopes because it is found that measurements of the places of the stars can be made with higher precision upon a suitable photograph than upon the stars themselves. But the photograph must be suitable; and that means that the images of the stars must be small and sharp, and the scale of the picture must be large. Now the scale of the picture depends directly upon the length of the telescope with which it is taken: to get a large-scale picture one must

have a long telescope. A small angular distance in the sky will then correspond to a comparatively large distance upon the plate. That will not produce a gorgeous picture, for the stars will be widely scattered, and all effect of richness will be lost, unless indeed one is photographing one of the great star clusters. But a fifty-thousandth of an inch upon the photograph, which is about the limit of our powers of measurement, will correspond to perhaps a couple of hundredths of a second of arc, an angle as large as the angle between two lines drawn to opposite points on the edge of a penny set up nearly two hundred miles away.

It is clear that when we have a telescope which will produce photographs upon so large a scale, the distances upon the plate of star from star must be measurable with a high order of accuracy. But it was one of the scientific surprises of about fifteen years ago to find that the measurements which are made upon such a photograph are actually a great deal more accurate than those which could be made by direct measurement at a similar telescope, and that in spite of the fact that a higher degree of magnification can be employed at the telescope than the photograph will profitably bear. The reason is very simple when it is pointed out. It is just this, that the image of a star in the telescope is very rarely absolutely steady. The light from the star, before it reaches the telescope, has to pass through a great depth of our atmosphere, which is, except

in rarely favoured regions of the world, continually disturbed by currents of air hotter or colder than the rest. Rifle-shots are very familiar with the kind of effect which this produces. On a blazing hot day, when currents of air are rising from the heated ground, they see their target dancing before their eyes, growing taller and shorter, and breaking in pieces, with the bull's-eye now in one corner and now altogether gone. Something of the same thing happens to the star-image when the telescope is set up in any but a few tranquil places, and especially when it is in a country much broken up by mountain-chains or arms of the sea. On all but two or three nights in the year the star-image will be seen dancing and quivering in the telescope, more or less as the air is much disturbed or uniform. And when the observer tries to set the spider-line of his measuring apparatus upon the image, he has to make some kind of estimate of its mean position and set upon that. It is really surprising how accurately this can be done after long experience; but the unsteadiness of the object is bound to set a limit to the accuracy which even the most practised observer can obtain. Now it might be thought that this constant vibration of the object would be more fatal to the photograph than to visual observation; but it is not so. For the motion is very quick: several times a second does the star make a small jump from its mean position and return to it, and on

an average it jumps every way with equal frequency. The consequence is that the photographic plate, which keeps a record of every jump, produces in the end an image which is certainly larger than it ought to be, but which is, as a rule, enlarged equally in every direction, so that its centre remains still where the centre of the image should be. And when the plate is put under the microscope of the measuring machine, and the threads which are moved by the measuring screw set upon the photographed image, the enlargement of the image is small loss compared with the gain which results from the fact that the image is steady. That is whence the real gain in accuracy of observation is derived.

And the gain in convenience is enormous. Suppose that the work in hand is the survey of a rich and complex group of stars. The aim is to lay down the present positions of the stars in that group with all possible accuracy, in order that we may bequeath to future generations of astronomers a complete record of the configuration as it appears to-day. For the present configuration will not remain unchanged for ever. The stars are doubtless in motion with respect to one another, and our whole solar system is in motion through space, so that one day the group will be seen from a sensibly different point of view. Small changes will come to pass in the apparent arrangement of the group, and in the

course of years they will develop, so that ultimately something may be discovered of the real structure of that distant region of the universe, and of the laws by which its motions are controlled. The duty of astronomers of to-day is to leave an indubitable record of what we see now: that will be the foundation on which our successors may be able to rear their theories, when the slow cosmical changes have had time to develop. Now, to make by direct visual observation such a survey of even a small group of stars is a most tedious and troublesome business. It involves many nights of work at the telescope, interrupted often by spells of bad weather, with the transparency and steadiness of the air continually varying, and, worst of all, with a ceaseless change in the conditions which control the many corrections that must be applied to the observations, to free them from determined sources of error,—for no measure made at the telescope is fit to stand as it is made, as an expression of real truth. Night by night the parts of the telescope expand when it is warmer, and shrink when it is cold, introducing into the measures all manner of discrepancies; and there are defects of workmanship still remaining when the maker has done his best, whose effects must be determined and allowed for. The effect of the refraction of the air upon the measures is always altering; the effects of the aberration of light vary with the position

of the earth in its orbit round the sun; and the complications which arise from the slow steady swing, and the little swings superposed upon it, of the axis of the earth itself, can scarcely be expressed in words. It requires no elaboration of the argument to make it clear that when a set of measures extends over many hours, or many nights, the calculation of all these things afresh for every single measure consumes a terrible amount of time, and is unspeakably dreary. And the trouble is all due to the fact that the measures made by eye observation at the telescope must be made one after the other. If they could all be made at once there would be only one set of conditions, instead of many, for which the corrections must be calculated and applied. Photography has made this possible. The sensitive plate will record as easily ten thousand stars as ten; and when it is developed, there is the record of all the stars under exactly the same conditions. It may be put away until a season of cloudy weather stops work at the telescope; it may be measured gradually day by day, as the convenience of the observer, not of the clerk of the weather, may dictate. And when these troublesome corrections of which we have spoken come to be applied, there is only one set to calculate instead of hundreds. One uniform scheme of corrections will apply to the whole of the measures which may be made, entirely because

the observations, if we may apply such a term to the processes which go on among the sensitive silver particles embedded in the gelatine film, were made all at once instead of in small successive groups.

That is the most real, and the least obvious to unprofessional eyes, of the benefits which the application of photography have conferred upon the science of astronomical measurement. It is no exaggeration to say that had photography never lent its all-recording aid, it would have been impossible for all the astronomers of this century to accumulate one tithe of the records which have been amassed in the last ten years of the structure of the sky as we see it to-day,—records whose value will increase year by year, until they enable perhaps the astronomers of some future century to learn as much of the laws of the great universe of stars as we know of our little solar system which is set within it.

So much for the exact measurements, which play so large a part in the astronomer's labours, so small a one in the popular conception of them. An astronomer is often regarded as a man who sits up all night watching at his telescope, to be rewarded at last by picking up something new in the sky. That is certainly how new objects, planets and their satellites, comets, nebulae, were, and still are, discovered, though we shall presently see that photography has invaded, and in great part conquered,

this domain also of our science. But greater than the discovery of many comets or nebulae is the discovery of a new law whose effects may be traced in the motions of the celestial bodies, and this comes not of descriptive observation, of merely acute star-gazing, but of accurate measurement. And when the operations of a law have been first roughly traced, qualitatively, if we may borrow a term from chemical analysis, there is next to be performed the quantitative analysis which puts into numbers the effects of the law's operations, and enables us to predict them for the future as we have observed them in the past. Bradley discovered the law of the aberration of light by the pertinacity with which he measured continually the position of a star when his observations began to show traces of some abnormality in its apparent motions for which he could not account. He literally ran the difficulty to earth, for he showed that the effect was due to the motion of the earth in its orbit round the sun, with a speed small, but not absolutely insignificant, compared with the speed with which light travels towards us from the stars. And within the last few years the American astronomer Seth Chandler has discovered the law and evaluated the magnitude of an oscillation in the position of the axis of the earth's figure, which had for years been vitiating the results of all manner of investigations, partly suspected, but not understood, and had driven more than one observatory to

despair. It was not detected by any special series of observations made for the purpose, but was sorted out from the results of measures made for divers ends at many observatories throughout the whole of the past century. And so it has always been a result of measurement when any great advance has been made in our knowledge of the laws which govern the universe. So it will have to be in the solution of the problems which confront astronomers in every direction. Measures, and more measures, and again still more are wanted. To insist that photography has made their accumulation more rapid and more certain is the greatest tribute that can be paid to the telescope's young and powerful ally.

One must not, however, allow enthusiasm for photography as a means to celestial measurement to thrust aside the claims it makes for recognition in many other rôles. As a mere observer the photographic plate possesses certain powers which the eye cannot hope to rival; but, on the other hand, it is in one quality at least conspicuously deficient, and it will be convenient to pause for a moment to draw a sharp line of demarcation between two main classes of descriptive observation, each of which is fruitful of discovery: the detection of minute detail in a bright object, and the detection of objects of the last degree of faintness. The power to excel in both these matters is not always found in the same eye. The man who is keen to pick up the

first shred of misty light which betokens the approach of a new comet may be altogether wanting in that curious insight which seems to feel rather than see that a small point of light is not single but double, and that increased magnifying power and a steady night will show one more new double star. And the photographic plate is of all observers the most one-sided in this respect. While it can patiently store up the light from a very faint source until at last an image can be developed, its power of portraying every minute detail is almost contemptible, at present. We say "at present" advisedly, because the chief cause which makes the photograph to fail in this respect may any day be overcome by some chemist's discovery. The cause is this, that the sensitive film is very coarse-grained. The particles of silver salt in it are of sensible size, and the image will bear only a small magnification—some twenty diameters—before it begins to split up into individual grains, and then nothing is to be gained by going further. The half-tone process blocks which are used so much for illustration nowadays provide a similar case. Whoever has brought a glass to bear upon one of these, in the hope of seeing fine detail more precisely, will be at no loss to appreciate the meaning of this difficulty. At any time this difficulty of the coarse-grainedness of our plates may be surmounted; but there will always remain the blurring effect of the unsteadiness of the air,

which, we have already seen, will enlarge the image of each point into a disc of some size. Even in the steadiest climates this must always stand in the way of photographing extremely fine detail. The plate is too faithful; it records everything that falls upon it, whether it is wanted or not. The trained eye can wait for steady moments, during which it will perceive clearly for an instant what is lost the next in a wave of unsteadiness; and so, by choosing its moments and waiting patiently, it can distinguish what will never be made distinct by the plate, which mixes good and bad together. There remains, then, one field in which the eye is still supreme, the examination of fine detail in the sky, whether in the systems of stars or the surface markings of planets and moons. And when we have mentioned this we have mentioned almost the only field of observation which will be left for those who are conservative enough to work still with the human rather than the photographic retina.

In its power of observing very faint sources of light the photographic plate is supreme. What the eye cannot see in a few seconds of intense gazing, it will never see at all. The light is not strong enough to stimulate the nerves of the retina and convey an appreciable impression to the brain; and no prolonged gazing will help, for whatever impression is produced dies away in a small part of a second, and can be succeeded only by others of the

same intensity. With the photographic plate it is quite different. Every small pulse of light which falls on a grain of sensitive silver salt does a little towards breaking up the molecules of which it is made. Wave after wave adds its effect, until at last some of them are decomposed, and an image can be developed. To photograph a very faint source of light is thus, within certain limits, merely a question of continuing the exposure for a sufficient length of time, a matter of skill and patience only. How great is the superiority of the photographic over the eye and pencil method of delineating the forms of the nebulae may be judged from the fact that, until photography was applied, we knew scarcely anything definite about the shape of most of them. Between the drawings of different observers there was a fine dissimilarity: the eye was baffled in the endeavour to follow the complex windings of wisps of light of the last degree of faintness, and no pencil could reproduce the infinitely delicate gradations with which they fade away into empty space. The great nebula in Andromeda is an object which offers to the eye at a telescope an appearance almost uninteresting. It is an oval patch of light which fades away imperceptibly to the edge of the field of view, and shows no structure whatever. By very attentive care the astronomer Bond detected some faint and apparently straight rifts in the outlying portions; but no definite structure could be satisfactorily made out until

in 1885 Dr Isaac Roberts obtained a photograph of the nebula, which was a revelation. Out of the shapeless mass of faint light and ill-seen channels was evolved a great bright nucleus set in a wonderful structure of rings, like a vast nebulous Saturn, irresistibly suggesting the formation on a tremendous scale of a system of bodies moving round a central sun, after the manner in which Laplace has in his nebular hypothesis pictured the growth of our own system of sun and planets.

This resolution of the Andromeda nebula into a structure so clearly generated by a whirling motion under the action of some such force as gravitation, and offering so tempting a case for the study of celestial dynamics upon a stupendous scale, lent a great impetus to the work of photographing the nebulae. About 6000 of them had been discovered before the days of photography, and very many years ago the famous telescope of the Earl of Rosse had shown that a few of them had a spiral structure. It was very hard to see—scarcely any telescope that was made for years afterwards would show it at all. It was still more difficult to explain, or even to conjecture, what force could twist a great mass of star-stuff—we have no better name for it—into the form of a spiral; and there was even some satisfaction in feeling that, after all, these cases were the exception, and not the rule, and that their explanation was not involved in whatever theories

we might have to form about the nebulae in general. Photography has completely upset so sanguine a view of the case. As nebula after nebula has yielded up the secret of its structure to the sensitive plate, more and more cases of the spiral form have been found, with the aggravated complication that the spiral is not single, but as a rule double, and is studded all along its length with bright knots that look suspiciously like ill-formed stars. And the culminating-point has been reached quite lately in a remarkable statement modestly hidden away in the description of a new branch of work which has recently been taken up at the Lick Observatory,—taken up four years ago by James Keeler, then newly appointed director, and interrupted in the saddest way soon afterwards by his untimely death. At Lick they have now the three-foot reflecting telescope which was mounted by Dr Common at Ealing more than twenty years ago, and which produced the remarkable early photographs of the Orion nebula which will always be associated with his name. When he set about to build a larger instrument it passed into other hands, and was finally presented to the Lick Observatory, where under the brilliant Californian sky it has first been enabled to show its true worth. It was put to a re-observation by photography of all the nebulae in Herschel's great catalogue, and when the plates were examined they were found covered with nebulae pre-

viously unknown, *and more than half of these were spirals*. It is estimated that there are at the very least 120,000 new nebulae within reach of this instrument, with so large a proportion of them of the class which were of old considered rare that we shall have to invert our notions of these bodies altogether, and for the future look upon a nebula which does not show a spiral structure as the exception rather than the rule. Compare this vast number with the 6000 which were known after a century of diligent star-gazing, and we shall have some small idea of what photography can do for descriptive observation and discovery.

And here the limitations of our space must set bounds to the consideration of an almost illimitable subject. We have left untouched fields of immense extent: the continuous registration by photography of the state of the surface of the sun; its use during the few precious seconds of a total eclipse of the sun, to accumulate pictures which can be studied continuously without giving up all their secrets before an eclipse comes round again; its application to the purpose of mapping the visible spectra of the stars more minutely than can

be done by eye, and of pushing the investigation far into the parts of the spectrum beyond the violet which the eye can never see; and, lastly, that continual survey and record of the state of the sky night by night, which is carried on almost automatically at the observatory where the "celestial policeman" has his beat. To examine them all would but lay greater emphasis upon the part which photography can play in the business of record and descriptive observation of the sky; and this is perhaps so well known through the beautiful plates that now adorn every text-book, that to insist further upon it might but obscure what has been our principal theme, —that an even higher interest attaches to the work of tracing the laws which govern the motions and the developments of the bodies already known to us than belongs to the more showy work of discovery and description of new and strange objects; that this comes of careful and continuous measurement; and that the highest among the claims which photography has upon our consideration is the fact that it has rendered the art of astronomical measurement at once more expeditious and more accurate.

EPISODES IN THE ADVENTURES OF M. D'HARICOT.¹*(Translated from the original French by J. STORER CLOUSTON.)*

THE MONSIEUR MAKES A FRIEND AND A PUBLIC APPEARANCE.

I.

"Adieu, the land of my birth!
Henceforth strange faces!"—BOULVARDÉ.

ON my window-sill lies a faded rose—a rose plucked from an English lane. As I write, my eyes fall upon the gardens, the forests around my ancestral chateau, but the faint scent is an English perfume. To the land of that rose, the land that sheltered, befriended, amused me, I dedicate these memoirs of my sojourn there.

They are a record of incidents and impressions that sometimes have little connection one with another, beyond the possession of one character in common. Myself; I am that individual who, with unsteady feet, will tread the tight-rope, dance among the eggs, leap through the paper tambourine,—in a word, play clown and hero to the melody of the castanets. I hold out my hat that you may drop in a sou should you chance to be amused. To the serious I herewith bid adieu, for instruction, I fear, will be conspicuously absent—unless, indeed, my follies serve as a warning. And now, without further prologue, I raise the curtain.

The first scene is a railway-carriage swiftly travelling farther and farther from the sea that washes the dear shores of France. Look out of the window, and behold! the green fields, the heavy hedgerows enclosing them so tightly, the trees, not in woods but scattered everywhere as by a reckless forester, the brick farms, the hop-fields, the moist vaporous atmosphere of England.

Cast your eyes within and you will see, wrapped in an ulster of a British pattern, concealing all that is not British in appearance, an exile from his native land. Not to make a mystery of this individual, you will see indeed myself.

And I—why did I travel thus enshrouded? why did my eye look with melancholy upon this fertile landscape? why did I sit sad and sombre as I travelled through this strange land? There were many things fresh and novel to stir the mind of an adventurer. The name, the platform, the look of every station we sped past, was a little piece of England,

¹ These episodes are culled from that popular French work, 'The Adventures of M. D'Haricot,' of which an unabridged translation is shortly to be placed before the English-speaking public. In the meantime it is hoped that this foretaste may not dissuade even the most austere (*les prudes* in the original text) from venturing upon the omitted portions.—TRANSLATOR.

curious in its way. Many memories of the people and the places I had known in fiction should surely have been aroused and lit my heart with some enthusiasm. What reason, then, for sadness?

I shall tell you, since the affair is now no secret, and as it hereafter touches my narrative. I was a Royalist, an adherent of the rightful King of France. I am still: I boast it openly. But at that time a demonstration had been premature, a Government was alarmed, and I had fled. Hereafter I shall tell you more of the secret and formidable society of which I was then a young enthusiastic member—the Une, Deux, Trois League, or U.D.T.'s as we styled ourselves in brief, the forlorn-hope of Royalty in France. At present it is sufficient to say that we had failed. Baffled hopes, doubt as to the future, fear for the present, were my companions; and they are not gay, these friends. I felt, and confess it now mirthfully enough, suspicious of the porter of the train, of the guard, of the people who eyed me. I was young, and "political offender" had a terrible sound. The Bastille, Siberia, St Helena,—were not these places built, created, discovered for the sole purpose of returning white-haired enfeebled unfortunates to their native land, only to find their homes dissolved, their families deceased, themselves forgotten? The truth is that I was already in mourning for myself. The prospect of entering history by the martyr's postern had seemed

noble in the heat of action and the excitement of intrigue. Now I only desired my liberty and as little public attention as possible. I commend this personal experience to all conspirators.

Such a frame of mind begets suspicions fast, and when I found myself in the same compartment with a young man who had already glanced at me in the Gare du Nord and taken a longer look on board the steamboat, I felt, I admit, decidedly uncomfortable. From beneath the shade of my travelling-cap I eyed him for the first half-hour with a deep distrust. Yet since he regarded me with that total lack of interest an Englishman bestows upon the uninitiated, and had besides an appearance of honesty written on his countenance, I began to feel somewhat ashamed of my suspicions, until at last I even came to consider him with interest as one type of that strange people among whom for a longer or a shorter time I was doomed to dwell. He differed, it is true, both from the busts of Shakespeare and the statues of Wellington, yet he was far from unpleasing. An athletic form, good features, a steady blue eye, a complexion rosy as a girl's, fair hair brushed flat across his forehead, thirty years of truth-telling, cricket-playing, and the practice of three or four elementary ethical principles, not to mention an excellent tailor, all went to make this young man a refreshing and an encouraging spectacle.

"Bah!" I said to myself. "My friend may not be the

Poet Laureate or the philanthropic M. Carnegie, but at least he is no spy."

By nature I am neither bashful nor immoderately timid, and it struck me that some talk with a native might be of service. My spirits, too, were rising fast. The train had not yet been stopped and searched; we were nearing the great London where he who seeks concealment is as one pin in a trayful; the hour was early in the day, and the sun breaking out made the wet grass glisten.

Yes, it was hard to remain silent on that glorious September morning, even though dark thoughts sat upon the same cushion.

"Monsieur," I said, "the sun is bright."

With the remark he seemed to show his agreement by a slight smile and a murmured phrase. The smile was pleasant, and I felt encouraged to continue.

"Yet it does not always follow that the heart is gay. Indeed, monsieur, how often we see tears on a June morning, and hear laughter in March! It must have struck you often, this want of harmony in the world. Has it not?"

I had been so carried away by my thoughts that I had failed to observe the lack of sympathy in my fellow-traveller's countenance.

"Possibly," he remarked drily.

"Ah," I said with a smile, "you do not appreciate. You are English."

"I am," he replied. "And you are French, I suppose?"

At his words suspicions awoke in my heart. It was only as a Frenchman that I ran the risk of arrest.

"No; I am an American."

This was my first attempt to disclaim my nationality, and each time I denied my country I, like Peter, suffered for it. Fair France, your lovers should be true! That is the lesson.

"Indeed!" was all he said; but I now began to enjoy my first experience of that disconcerting phenomenon, the English stare. Later on I discovered that this generally means nothing, and is, in fact, merely an inherited relic of the days when each Englishman carried his "knuckle-duster" (a weapon used in boxing), and struck the instant his neighbour's attention was diverted. It is thanks to this peculiarity that they now find themselves in possession of so large a portion of the globe, but the surviving stare is not a reassuring spectacle.

Yet I must not let him see that I was in the slightest inconvenienced by his attitude. The antidote to suspicion is candour. I was candid.

"Yes," I said, "I am told that I do not resemble an American, but my name at least is good Anglo-Saxon."

And I handed him a card prepared for such an emergency. On it I had written "Nelson Bunyan, Esq." If that sounded French then I had studied philology in vain.

"I am a traveller in search of curios," I added. "And you?"

"I am not," he replied, with

a trace of a smile and a humorous look in his blue eyes.

He was quite friendly and perfectly polite, but that was all the information about himself I could extract: "I am not," followed by a commonplace concerning the weather. A singular type! Repressed, self-restrained, reticent, good-humouredly condescending,—in a word, British. We talked of various matters, and I did my best to pick him like his native winkle from the shell. Of my success here is a sample. We had (or I had) been talking of the things that were best worth a young man's study.

"And there is Love," I said. "What a field for inquiry, what variety of aspects, what practical lessons to be learned!"

He smiled at my ardour.

"Have you ever been in love?" I asked.

"Possibly," he replied carelessly.

"But devotedly, hopelessly, as a man who would sacrifice heaven for his mistress?"

"Haven't blown my brains out yet," he answered.

"Ah, you have been successful; you have invariably brought your little affairs to a fortunate issue?"

"I don't know that I should call myself a great ladies' man."

"Possibly you are engaged?"

I suggested, remembering that I had heard this operation has a singularly sedative effect upon the English.

"No," he said, with an air of ending the discussion; "I am not."

Again this "I am not," fol-

lowed by a compression of the lips and a cold glance into vacancy.

"Ah, he is a dolt! a lump of lead!" I said to myself, and I sighed to think of the people I was leaving, the people of spirit, the people of wit. Little did I think how my opinion of my fellow-traveller would one day alter, how my heart would expand.

But now I had something else to catch my attention. I looked out of the window, and behold, there was nothing to be seen but houses. Below the level of the railway-line was spread a sea of dingy brick dwellings, all, save here and there a church-tower, of one uniform height and of one uniform ugliness. Against the houses nearest to the railway were plastered or propped by way of decoration vast coloured testimonials to the soaps and meat extracts of the country. In lines through this prosaic landscape rose telegraph-posts and signals, and trains bustled in every direction.

"Pardon me," I said to my companion, "but I am new to this country. What city is this?"

"London," said he.

London, the far-famed! So this was London. Much need to "paint it red," as the English say of a frolic!

"Is it all like this?" I asked.

"Not quite," he replied in his good-humoured tone.

"Thank God!" I exclaimed devoutly. "I do not like to speak disrespectfully of any British institution, but this—my faith!"

We crossed the Thames, grey and gleaming in the sunshine, and now I am at Charing Cross. Just as the train was slowing down I turned to my fellow-traveller.

"Have you been vaccinated?" I asked.

"I have," said he in surprise.

You see even reticence has its limits.

"I thank you for the confidence," I replied gravely.

As he stood up to take his umbrella from the rack he handed me back my card.

"I say," he abruptly remarked, in a tone, I thought, of mingled severity and innuendo, "I should have this legend altered if I were you. Good morning."

And with that he was gone, and my doubts had returned. Evidently he suspected something. Well, there was nothing to be done but maintain a stout heart and trust to fortune. And it takes much to drive gaiety from my spirits for long. I was a fugitive, a stranger, a foreigner, but I hummed a tune cheerfully as I waited my turn for the ordeal of the custom-

house. And here came one good omen. My appearance was so deceptively respectable and my air so easy that not a question was asked me. One brief glance at my dress shirts and I was free to drive into the streets and lose myself in the life of London.

Lose myself, do I say? Yes, indeed; and more than myself too. My friends, my interests, my language, my home,—all these were lost as utterly as though I had dropped them overboard in the Channel. I had not time to obtain one single introduction before I left, or further counsel than I remembered from reading English books. And I assure you it is not so easy to benefit by the experiences of Mr Pickwick and Miss Sharp as it may seem. Stories may be true to life, but alas! life is not so true to stories.

Fortunately I could talk and read English well, even, I may say, fluently; also I had the spirit of my race; and finally—and perhaps most fortunately—I was not too old to learn.

II.

"In that city, sire, even the manner of breathing was different."—PIZZARRO.

I was in London; the vastest collection of people and of houses this world has ever seen; the ganglion, the museum, the axle of the English race; the cradle of much of their genius and most of their fogs; the home of Dr Johnson, the Bishops of Canterbury, the im-

mortal Falstaff, the effigied Fawkes; also the headquarters of all the profitable virtues, all the principles of business. With an abandon and receptivity which I am pleased to think the Creator has reserved as a consolation for the non-English, I had hardly been

half an hour in the city before I had become infected with something of its spirit.

"Goddam! What ho!" I said to myself, in the English idiom. "For months, for years, for ever perhaps, I am to live among this incomprehensible people. Well, I shall strive to learn something, and, by Great Scotland! to enjoy something!" So I turned up my trousers and sallied out of my hotel.

Ah! This was life indeed I had come into; not more so than Paris, but differently so. Stolidly, good-naturedly, and rapidly, the citizens struggle along through the crowds on the pavement. They seem like helpless straws revolving in a whirlpool. Yet does one of them wish to cross the street? Instantly a constable raises a finger, the traffic of London is stopped, and Mr Benjamin Bull, youngest and least important son of John, passes uninjured to the farther side.

"What is this street?" I ask one of these officers as he stands in the midst of a crossing signalling which cab or dray shall pass him.

"Strand," says he, stopping five omnibuses to give me this information.

"Where does it lead me?"

"Which way do you wish to proceed?" he inquires politely, still detaining the omnibuses.

"East," I reply at a venture.

"First to the right, second to the left, third to the right again, and take the blue bus as far as the Elephant and Angel," he answers without any hesitation.

"A thousand thanks," I gasp. "I think on the whole I should be safer to go westwards."

He waves his hand, the omnibuses (which by this time have accumulated to the number of fourteen) proceed upon their journey, and I, had I the key to the cipher, should doubtless be in possession of valuable information. Such is one instance of the way in which the Londoner's substitute for Providence does its business.

I shall not attempt to give at this point an exhaustive description of London. The mandates of fortune sent me at different times to enjoy amusing and embarrassing experiences in various quarters of the city, and these I shall touch upon in their places.

It is sufficient to at present observe that London is a name for many cities. A great town, like a great man, is made up of various characters strung together. Just as the soldier becomes at night the lover, and next morning the philosopher, so a city is on the east a factory, on the west a palace, on the north a lodging-house. So it is with Paris, with Berlin, with all. But London is so large, so devoid of system in its creation and in its improvements, so variously populated, that it probably exceeds any in its variety.

No emperor or council of city fathers mapped the streets or regulated the houses. What edifice each man wanted, that he built, guided only by the length of his purse and the depth of his barbarism; while the street on which this arose

is either the same roadway as once served the Romans, or else the speculative builder's idea of best advancing the interests of his property. Then some day comes a great company who wish to occupy a hundred mètres of frontage and direct attention to their business. So many houses are pulled down and replaced by an erection twice the height of anything else, and designed as far as possible to imitate the cries and costume of a bookmaker.

And all this time there are surviving in nooks and corners picturesque and venerable buildings of a bygone age; and also of late are arising on all sides worthy and dignified new piles. So that the history of each house and each street, the mental condition of their architects and the financial condition of their occupants, are written upon them plainly with a smoky finger. For you see all this through an atmosphere whose millions of molecules of carbon and of aqueous vapour darken the bricks and the stones, and hang like a veil of fine gauze before them. London is huge, but this eternal mistiness makes it seem huger still; for however high a building you climb, you can see nothing but houses and yet more houses, melting at what looks a vast distance into the blue or yellow haze. Really there may be green woods and the fair slopes of a countryside within a few miles, but since you cannot see them, your heart sinks and you believe that such good things must lie hid many leagues below

the brick horizon. More than once upon a Sunday morning, when the air was clear, I have been startled to see from the Strand itself a glimpse of the Surrey hills quite near and very beautiful, and I have said, "Thank God for this!"

It was in the morning that I arrived in London, and my first day I spent in losing my way through the labyrinth of streets, which are set never at a right angle to one another, and are of such different lengths that I could scarcely persuade myself it had not all been specially arranged to mislead me.

About one o'clock I entered a restaurant and ordered a genuine English steak—the Porter-house it was called. In quality I admit this segment of an ox was admirable, but as for its quantity—my faith! I ate it till half-past two, and scarcely had made an impression then. Half stupefied with this orgy and the British beer I had taken to assist me in the protracted effort, I returned to my hotel, and there began the journal on which these memoirs are founded. As showing my sensations at the time, they are now of curious interest to me. I shall give the extract I wrote then:—

"Amusing, absorbing, entertaining as a Chinese puzzle where all the pieces are alive; all these things is the city of London. Why, then, has it already begun to pall upon me? Ah, it is the loneliness of a crowd! In Paris I can walk by the hour and never see a face I know, and yet

not feel this sense of desolation. Friends need not be before the eye, but they must be at hand when you wish to call them. For myself I call them pretty frequently, yet often can remain for a time content to merely know that they are somewhere not too far away. But here: I may turn north, south, east, or west, and walk as far as I like in any direction, and not one should I find!

"Shall I ever make a friend among this cold, phlegmatic, business-like people? Some day, perhaps, an acquaintance may be struck with some such reticent and frigid monster as my fair-haired companion of the journey. Would such a one console or cheer or share a single sentiment? Impossible! *Mon Dieu!* I shall leave this town in three days,—I swear it. And where then? The devil knows!"

At this point the writing of these notes was unexpectedly interrupted, only to be resumed as it chanced after some adventurous days.

A waiter entered bearing a letter for me. I sprang up and seized it eagerly. It was addressed to "Mr Nelson Bunyan, Esq.," and marked "Immediate and confidential." These words were written in English and execrably misspelt.

It could come from but one source, for who else knew my *nom de plume*, who else would write "Immediate and confidential," and, I grieve to say it, who else would take their precautions in such a way

as instantly to raise suspicions? Had the secretary of the "Une, Deux, Trois" no English dictionary that he need make the very waiter stare at this extraordinary address? I did my best to pass it off lightly.

"From a lady," I said to the man; "one not very well educated, perhaps; but is education all we seek in woman?"

"No, sir," said he, replying to my glance with insufferable familiarity; "not all, by no means."

Alas, that the fugitive cannot afford to take offence!

I opened the letter, and, as I expected, it was headed by the letters U.D.T.

"Go at once to the house of Mr Frederick Hankey, No. 114 or 115 George Road, Streatham. Knock thrice on the third window, and when he comes say distinctly, 'For the King.' He will give directions for your safety."

This missive was only signed "F 11," but of course I knew the writer—our most indefatigable, our most enthusiastic, the secretary himself.

Well, here was something to be done, a friend perhaps to be made, a spice of interest suddenly thrown into this city of strangers. After my fashion, my spirits rose as quickly as they had fallen. I whistled an air, and began to think this somewhat dreary hotel not a bad place after all. I should only wait till darkness fell, and then set out to interview Mr Frederick Hankey.

III.

"What door will fit this key?"—CASTELLO SOPRANI.

As I ate my solitary dinner before starting upon my expedition to Mr Hankey's house, I began to think less enthusiastically of the adventure. Here was I comfortable in my hotel, though, I admit, rather lonely; safe so far, and apparently suspected by none to be other than the blameless Bunyan. Besides, now that I knew I could find a friend for the seeking, my loneliness suddenly diminished. Also I was buoyed by the thought that I was a real adventurer, a romantic exile,—as much so, in fact, as Prince Charles of Scotland or my own beloved king. Now I was to knock upon the window of a house that might be either No. 114 or 115, and give myself blindfold to strangers.

Yet on second thoughts I reflected that I knew nothing of English laws or English ways. Was I not in "perfidious Albion," and might I not be handed over to the French Government in defiance of all treaties, in order to promote the insidious policy of Chamberlain? Yes, I should go, after all, and I drank to the success of my adventure in a bottle of wine that sent me forth to the station in as gay a spirit as any gallant could wish.

I had made cautious inquiries, asking of different servants at the hotel, and I had little difficulty in making my way by

train as far as the suburb in which Mr Hankey lived. There I encountered the first disquieting circumstance. Inquiring of a policeman, I found there was no such place as George Road, but a St George's Road was well known to him. If F 11 had been so inaccurate in one statement, might he not be equally so in another?

I may mention here that the name of this road is my own invention. The mistake was a similar one to that I had narrated. In all cases I have altered the names of my friends and their houses, as these events happened so recently that annoyance might be caused, for the English are a reticent nation, and shrink from publicity as M. Zola does from oblivion.

Up an immensely long and very dark road I went, studying the numbers of the houses on either side; and here at once a fresh difficulty presented itself. In an English suburb it is the custom to conceal the number provided by the municipal authorities, and decorate the gates instead with a fanciful or high-sounding title. Thus I passed "Blenheim Lodge," "Strathcorry," "Rhododendron Grove," and many other such residences, but only here and there could I find a number to guide me. By counting from 84, I came at last upon two houses standing with their gates close together, that must either

and think he will surely know some one so called.

"Smith mentioned you."

But no, there is no gleam of recognition.

"Indeed," is all he remarks, very calmly.

There is no help for it; I must go on.

"I intended to call upon you some day this week. I have heard you highly spoken of; 'the great Fisher,' 'the famous Fisher.' Indeed, sir, I assure you your name is a household word in Scotland."

I chose Scotland because I know its accent is different from that of England. My own also is different. Therefore I shall be Scottish. Unhappy selection!

"Do you mean to pretend you are Scottish?" says Fisher, frowning as well as breathing at me.

I must withdraw one foot.

"Half Scottish, half Italian," I reply.

Ah, France, why did I deny you? I was afraid to own you, I blush to confess it. And I was righteously punished.

"Italian?" says he with more interest. "Ah, indeed."

He stares more intently, frowns more portentously, and respires more loudly than ever.

"A charming country," I say.

"No doubt," says Fisher.

At this moment the door opens behind him and a lady appears. She has a puffy cheek, a pale eye, a comfortable figure, a curled fringe of grey hair, and slightly projecting teeth; in a word, the mate of Fisher. There can be no mistake, and I am quick to seize the chance.

"My dear Mrs Fisher!" I exclaim, advancing towards her.

With a movement like a hippopotamus wallowing, Fisher places himself between us. Does he think I have come to elope with her?

I assume the indignant rôle.

"Mr Fisher!" I say, much hurt at this want of confidence.

"Who is this gentleman?" asks Mrs Fisher, looking at me with, I think, a not altogether disapproving glance.

"Ask him," says Fisher.

"Madame," I say with a bow, "I am an unfortunate stranger come to pay my respects to Mr Fisher and his beautiful lady. I wish you could explain my reception."

"What is your name?" says Mrs Fisher with comparative graciousness, considering that she is a bourgeois Englishwoman taken by surprise, and fearing both to be cold to a possible man of position and to be friendly with a possible nobody.

A name I must have, and I must invent it at once, and it must be something both Scottish and Italian. I take the first two that come into my head.

"Dugald Cellarini," I reply.

They look at one another dubiously. I must put them at their ease at any cost.

"A fine picture," I say, indicating the portrait of my host, "and an excellent likeness. Do you not think so, Mrs Fisher?"

She looks at me as if she had a new thought.

"Are you a friend of the artist?" she asks.

"An intimate," I reply with alacrity.

"We have informed Mr Benzine that we specially desired him not to bring any more of his Bohemian acquaintances to our house," says the amiable lady.

I am plunging deeper into the morass. Still I have at last accounted for my presence.

"Mr Benzine did not warn me of this, madame," I reply coldly. "I apologise, and I withdraw."

I made a step towards the door, but the large form of Fisher still intervenes.

"Then Benzine sent you?" he says.

"He did, though evidently under a misapprehension."

"And what about Smith?"

asks Fisher, with an approach to intelligence in his bovine eye.

"Well, what about him?" I ask defiantly.

"Did he send you too?"

"My reception has been such that I decline to give any further explanations."

"That is all very well," says Fisher, "that is all very well."

He is evidently cogitating what is all very well, when we hear heavy steps in the passage.

"They have come at last," he exclaims, and opens the door.

"More visitors," I say to myself, hoping now for a diversion. In another moment I get it. Enter the butler and two gigantic policemen!

IV.

"Let me out," said the Mouse, "I do not care for this cheese."—*Fables of La Fontaine.*

Picture now this comedy and its actors. Fisher of the porpoise habit, Mrs Fisher of the puffy cheek, poor Dugald Cellarini, and these two vast, blue-coated, thief-catching "bobbies" (as with kindly humour the English term their police); all save Dugald looking terribly solemn and important. He, poor man, strove hard to give the affair a lighter turn, but what is one artist in a herd of Philistines? I was not appreciated—that is the truth. A man may defy an empire, a papal bull, an infectious disease; but a prejudice—never.

"Constable," says Fisher, "I have caught him."

Both bobbies look at me with much the same depressing glance as Fisher himself.

"Yes, sir," says one, in what evidently was intended for a tone of congratulation, "so I see."

The other bobby evidently agreed with this sentiment. Wonderful unanimity! I have noticed it in the Paris gendarmes; also the same quick and intelligent grasp of a situation. This latter quality was so conspicuous in my two blue-coated friends that I named them instantly Lecoq and Holmes.

Holmes speaks next after an impressive pause.

"What's he done?"

"That is the point," says Fisher in a tone of such damaging insinuation that I am spurred to my defence.

"Exactly, what have I done?"

"He has endeavoured to effect an entry into my house by removing a pane of glass," says Fisher.

"Pardon me; to call the attention of the servants by rapping upon a pane of glass."

"Come, now, none of that," says Lecoq, with such severity that I see the situation at once. He is jealous. I have cast an imputation on some fair housemaid, the future Mrs Lecoq, no doubt.

"An assignation, you think?" I ask with a reassuring smile.

"Sir!" cries Mrs Fisher indignantly, "it is my daughter's window you broke!"

Shall I pose as the lover of Miss Fisher? I have heard that unmarried English girls take strange liberties.

"Your fair daughter——" I begin.

"Is a child of fifteen," interrupts virtuous Mrs Fisher, "and I am certain knows nothing of this person."

By the expression of their intelligent countenances Holmes and Lecoq show their concurrence in this opinion.

"Confront her with me!" I demand, folding my arms defiantly.

It has since struck me that this was a happy inspiration, and in the right dramatic key. Unfortunately it required an imaginative audience, and I had—two Fishers and two bobbies!

Rapidly I had calculated what would happen. The fair and innocent maiden should be aroused from her slumbers; with dishevelled locks and in a long, loose, and becoming drapery of some soft colour (light blue to harmonise with her flaxen hair, for instance) she should be led into the chamber of the inquisition; then my eye should moisten, my voice be as the lute of Apollo, and it would be a thousand francs to a dishonoured cheque that I should melt her into some soft confession. Not that I should ask her to compromise her reputation to save me. Never, on my honour, would I permit that! Indeed if my plight tempted her to invent a story she might repent of afterwards, I should disavow it with so sincere and honest an air that my captors would exclaim together, "We have misjudged him!"

No, I should merely persuade her to confess that a not ill-looking foreigner had pursued her with glances of chivalrous admiration for some days past, and that from his air of hopeless passion it was not surprising to find him to-night tapping upon her window-pane.

Alas, that so promising a scheme should fail through the incurable poverty of the Fisher spirit! My demand is simply ignored.

"What acquaintance have you with my daughter?" says Mrs Fisher icily.

"You will respect my confidence?" I ask earnestly.

"We shall use our discretion," replies the virtuous lady.

"Quite so; we shall use our

F

discretion," repeats her unspeakable husband.

"I am satisfied with your assurance," I say. "The discretion of a Fisher is equivalent to the seal of the confessional. I thank you from my heart, and I bow to your judgment."

"What do you know of my daughter?" Mrs Fisher repeats, quite unmoved by my candour.

"Madame, I was about to tell you. You asked if I was acquainted with that charming and, I can assure you on my honour, spotless young lady?"

"I did," says Mrs Fisher; "but I do not require any remarks on her character from you, sir."

"Pardon me; they escaped me inadvertently. What I feel deeply I am tempted to say. I do not know Miss Fisher personally. I have not yet ventured to address a word to her, not so much as a syllable, not even a whisper. My respect for her innocence, for her youth, for her parents, has been too great. But this I confess: I have for days, for weeks, for months, followed her loved figure with the eye of chaste devotion. On her walks abroad I have been her silent, frequently her unseen, attendant. Through every street in London I have followed the divine Miss Fisher, as a sailor the polar star. To-night in a moment of madness I approached her home, I touched her window that I might afterwards kiss the hand that had come so near her. In my passion I touched too hard; the pane broke: and here I stand before you."

So completely had I been carried away on the wings of my own fancy that once or twice in the course of this outburst I had committed myself to more than I had any intention of avowing. Be emphatic but never definite, is my counsel to the liar. But I had unluckily tied myself to my inventions. The gestures, the intonation, the key of sentiment were beyond criticism; but then I was addressing Mr and Mrs Fisher of Chickawungaree Villa.

They glance at one another, and Lecoq glances at them. He, honest man, merely touches his head significantly and winks in my direction. The Fishers are not, however, content with this charitable criticism.

"My daughter only returned from her seminary in Switzerland four days ago," says Mrs Fisher.

"And she has never visited the streets of London except in Mrs Fisher's company," adds her spouse, with a look of what is either dull hatred or impending apoplexy.

Even at that crisis my wits do not desert me.

"My faith!" I cry, "I must be mistaken! It is not, then, Miss Fisher whom I worship! A thousand pardons, sir, and I beg of you to convey them to the lady whom I disturbed under a misapprehension."

At this there is a pause, nobody volunteering to run with the message to the bedside of Miss Fisher, though I glance pointedly at Holmes, and even make the money in my pocket

jingle. At last comes a sound of stifled air trying to free a passage through something dense. It proceeds, I notice, from my friend Fisher. Then it becomes a more articulate though scarcely less disagreeable noise.

"I do not believe a word you say, sir!" he booms.

"My friend, you are an agnostic," I reply with a smile.

Fisher only breathes with more apparent difficulty than ever. He is evidently going to deal a heavy blow this time. It falls.

"I charge this person with being concerned in the burglary at Mrs Thompson's house last night; and with trying to burgle mine," says he.

He pauses, and then delivers another—

"He has confessed to being an Italian."

The constables prick up their ears.

"The organ-grinder!" exclaims Holmes with more excitement than I had thought him capable of.

"The man as made the butler drunk and gagged the cook!" cries Lecoq.

Here is a fine situation for a political fugitive. I am indignant. I am pathetic. No use. I explain frankly that I came to see Mr Hankey. That only deepens suspicion, for it seems that the excellent Hankey inhabited Mount Olympus House next door for only three weeks, and departed a month ago without either paying his rent or explaining the odour of dead bodies proceeding from his cellars. Doubtless my French

friends had acted for the best in sending me to him, but would that he had taken the trouble to inform them of his change of address! And then why had I ever thought of being an Italian? It appeared now that a gentleman of that nationality, having won the confidence of the Thompson children and the Thompson servants by his skill upon the hand-organ, had basely misused it in the fashion indicated by Lecoq. Certainly it was hard to see why such a skilled artist should have returned the very next night to a house three doors away and then bungled his business so shamefully, but that argument is beyond the imagination of my bobbies. In fact, they seem only too pleased to find a thief so ready to meet them half-way.

"Thank you, sir," says Holmes, at the conclusion of this painful scene. "We shouldn't mind a drop."

This means that they are about to be rewarded for their share in the capture by a glass of Fisher's ale. And I? Well, I am not to have any ale, but I am to accompany them to the cells, and next morning to make my appearance before the magistrate on one charge of burglary and another of attempted burglary.

I cannot resist one parting shot at my late host.

"Yes, Fisher," I remark critically, showing no hurry to leave the room, "I like that portrait of you. It has all your plain, well-fed, plum-pudding appearance without your unpleasant manner of breathing

and your ridiculous conversation—and it is not married to Mrs Fisher.”

To this there is no reply.

Indeed I do not think they have recovered their senses for at least ten minutes after I have left the room.

V.

“The comedy of the Law is probably the chief diversion of the Angels.”—*LA RABIDE.*

Over the rest of that night I shall draw a veil. I was taken to Newgate,¹ immured in the condemned cell, and left to my reflections. They were sombre enough, I assure you. Young, ambitious, ardent, I sat there in that foreign prison without a friend, without a hope. If I state the truth about myself, this excuse will be seized for sending me back to France. And what then? Another prison! If I keep my identity concealed, how shall I prove that I am not the burgling-musician?

As you can well imagine, I slept very little and dreamt much. I was only thankful I had no parents to mourn my loss; for by this time I had quite made up my mind that the organ-grinder's antecedents would certainly hang me.

I cursed Fisher, I cursed the League, I cursed F 11, that indefatigable conspirator who had dragged me from a comfortable hotel and a safe alias to—what? The scaffold; ah yes, the scaffold!

It may sound amusing now, when I am still unchanged; but it was far from amusing then, I assure you.

Well, the morning broke at last, and I was led, strongly escorted by the twins of Lecoq and Holmes, towards the venerable law-court at Westminster. I recognised the judge, the jury, the witnesses, and the counsel, though my thoughts were too engrossed to take a careful note of these. In fact, in writing this account I am to some extent dependent on reports of other trials. They are all much the same, I understand, differing chiefly as one or more judges sit upon the bench. In this case there was only one, a little gentleman with a shrewd eye and a dry voice,—a typical hanging judge, I said to myself. I prepared for the worst.

First comes the formal accusation. I, giving the name of Dugald Cellarini, am a blood-thirsty burglar. Such in brief is the charge, although its deadly significance is partly obscured by the discreet phraseology of the law.

Then my friend Holmes enters the box, stiff, and evidently nervous, and in a halting voice and incoherent manner (which in France would inevitably have led to his being placed in the dock himself) he describes the

¹ For this account of his imprisonment and his trial M. D'Haricot is alone responsible.—TRANSLATOR.

clever way I was caught by himself and the astute Lecoq. So misleading is his account of my demeanour and suspicious conduct that I instantly resolve to cross-examine him. Politely, but firmly, I request the judge's permission. It is granted, and I can see there is a stir of excitement in the court.

"Did I struggle with you?" I ask.

Holmes, turning redder than ever, admits that I did not.

"Did I knock you down? Did I seek to escape?"

No, Holmes was not knocked down, nor had I tried to escape from the representatives of the law.

"And why, if I was a burglar, did I not try to do these things?"

"You wasn't big enough," says Holmes.

Well, I admit he had the advantage of me there. The court, prejudiced against me as they were, laughed with Holmes, but at the next bout I returned his lunge with interest.

"What did Fisher give you to drink?" I ask.

The question is dismissed by my vindictive judge as irrelevant, but I have thrown Holmes into great confusion and made the court smile with me.

"That is all," I say in the tone of a conquerer, and thereupon Lecoq takes the place of Holmes, and in precisely the same manner and with the same criminal look of abasement repeats almost exactly the same words.

Against him I design a different line of counter-attack. I remember his jealousy when

I spoke of the servants, and if possible I shall discredit his testimony by an assault upon his character. Assuming an encouraging air, I ask—

"You know the servants at Fisher's house?"

He stammers, "Yes."

"With one in particular you are well acquainted?"

He looks to the judge for protection; but so little is my line of attack suspected that the judge only gazes at us in rapt attention.

"I do," says Lecoq, after a horribly incriminating pause.

"Now tell me this," I demand sternly, "Have you always behaved towards her as an honourable policeman?"

Would you believe it? This question is also disallowed! But I think I have damaged Lecoq all the same.

Next comes Fisher, red-faced, more pompous than ever, and inspired, I can see, with a vindictive hatred towards myself. It appears that he is a London merchant; that his daughter heard a tapping on her window and called her father; that he and his servant caught me in the act of entering the chaste bed-chamber through a broken window.

At this point I ask if I may put a question. The judge says Yes.

"How much glass fell out?" I ask.

"Half a pane," says he.

"And the rest stayed in?"

He has to admit that it did—very ungraciously however.

"How many panes to the window?"

He cannot answer this; but

the judge, much to my surprise, comes to my rescue, and elicits the fact that there are six.

"How far had I gone through a twelfth of your window?" I ask.

His face gets redder, and there is a laugh through the court. I feel that I have "scored a try," as they say, and my spirits begin to rise again.

But, alas! they are soon damped. Mrs Thompson's butler steps into the witness-box, and a more shameless liar I have never heard. Yes, he remembers an organ-grinder coming to the house on various occasions during the past fortnight. Here I interpose.

"What did he play?" I ask.

"Not being interested in such kinds of music, I cannot say."

"Possibly you have a poor ear," I suggest.

"My ear is as right as some people's, but it has not been accustomed to the hand-organ," says the butler with a magnificence that seems to impress even the judge.

"You should have it boxed, my friend," I cannot help retorting, though I fear this does not meet the unqualified approval of the judge.

Next he is asked for an account of his dealings with the musician when that gentleman visited the kitchen upon the night of the burglary, and it appears that shortly after the grinder's departure he lost consciousness with a completeness and rapidity that can only have been caused by some insidious drug surreptitiously introduced into the glass of beer

he happened to be finishing at that moment. He scorns the insinuation (made by myself) that he and the musician were drinking together: he would not so far demean himself. That outcast did, however, on one occasion approach suspiciously near his half-empty glass.

"Well," I remark with a smile, "the moral is, that next time you should provide your guests with glasses of their own."

Again I score, but quickly he has his revenge. Does he recognise me as the organ-grinder? he is asked. He is not sure of the face, not taking particular notice of persons of that description, but — he is ready to swear to my voice!

It seems, then, that I have the same accent as an Italian organ-grinder! I bow ironically, but the sarcasm, I fear, is lost.

"What is so distinctive about this voice I share with your Italian boon-companion?" I inquire suavely.

He evidently dislikes the innuendo, but in the presence of many of his betters, decides to retaliate only by counter-sarcasm.

"It's what I calls an uneducated voice," says he.

"Uneducated Italian or uneducated English?" I inquire.

"Italian," he replies with the most consummate assurance.

"You know Italian?"

"Having travelled in Italy, I am not altogether unfamiliar," he answers.

I then put to him a simple Italian sentence.

"What does that mean, and

is it educated or uneducated?" I ask.

"It means something that I should not like his lordship to hear, and is the remark of a thoroughly uneducated person," he retorts.

The court roars, and some even cheer the witness. For myself, I am compelled to join the laughter. The impudence is so colossal!

"My lord," I say to the judge, "this distinguished scholar has so delicate a mind that I should only scandalise him by asking further questions."

So the butler retires, with such an air of self-satisfaction that I could have shot him, and the gagged cook takes his place.

This young woman is not ill-looking, and is very abashed at having to make this public appearance. It appears that her glimpse of the burglar was brief, as with commendable prudence he rapidly fastened her night-shift over her head, but in that glimpse she recognised—my moustache!

"Could she tell how it felt?" I ask.

This point is appreciated by the court; though not, I fear, by the judge, who looks at me as though calculating the drop he should allow. Yes, it is all very well to jest about my moustache, but to be hanged by it, that is a different affair. And the case is very black against me.

"Has the prisoner any witnesses to call?" asks the judge.

"No," I reply, "but I shall make you a speech."

And thereupon I delight them with the following oration—an oration which should have gone on much longer than it did but for a most unforeseen interruption.

"My lord, the jury, and my peers," I begin, remembering so much from my historical studies, "I am entirely guiltless of this extraordinary and infamous charge. No one but such a man as Fisher would have brought it!" (Here I point my finger at the unhappy tenant of Chickawungaree.) "No one else of the brave English would have stooped thus to injure an innocent and defenceless stranger! As to the butler and the cook, you have seen their untruthful faces, you have heard their incredible testimony. I say no more regarding them. The policemen have only shown that they found me an unwilling and insulted—though invited—guest of the perfidious Fisher. What harm, then? Have you never been the unwilling guest of a distasteful host?"

"Who am I? Why did I visit such a person as Fisher? I shall tell you. I am a French subject, a traveller in England. Only yesterday I arrived in London. How can I then have burgled Madame Thompson? Impossible! Absurd! I had not set my foot upon the shores of England!"

At this point the judge, in his dry voice, interrupts me to ask if I can bring any witnesses to prove this assertion.

"Witnesses?" I exclaim, not knowing what the devil to

add to this dramatic cry, when behold! I see, sent by Providence, a young man rising from his seat in the court. It is my fair-haired fellow-passenger!

"May I give evidence?" says he.

"Though your name be Iscariot, yes!" I cry.

The judge frowns, for it seems the question was addressed to him and not to me; but he permits my acquaintance to enter the box. And now a doubt assails me. What will he say? Add still more damaging testimony, or prove that I am the harmless Bunyan?

He does neither, but in a very composed and assured fashion that carries conviction with it, he tells the judge that he travelled with me from Paris on the very night of the crime, adding that I had appeared to him a very harmless though somewhat eccentric person. Not the adjectives I should have chosen myself, perhaps; but I assure you I should have let him call me vulgar or dirty without a word of protest.

Of course it follows that I cannot be the musical burglar, while as for my friend Fisher,

that worthy gentleman is so disconcerted at the turn things have taken that he seems as anxious to withdraw his share of the charge as he was to make it.

I am saved; the case breaks down.

"How's that?" says the judge.

"Guiltless!" cry the jury.

And so I am a free man once more, and the cook must swear to another moustache.

The first thing I do is to seize my witness and drag him from the court, repeating my thanks all the while.

"But how did you come to be in court?" I ask.

"Oh, I happen to be a barrister," he explains; "I came in about another case, and finding you'd been burgling, I thought I'd stay and see the fun."

"Your case must take care of itself; come and lunch with me."

Yes, he finds he can escape. His case will not come on to-day as mine has taken so long, and so we go forth together to begin a friendship that I trust may always endure.

And to this day I have never paid for Fisher's broken pane of glass.

(To be continued.)

A DAY IN CHITRAL.

IN the month of June the Chitral river is a black flood, swollen by numerous glacier torrents, tearing at a tremendous pace along the intricate way it has, in the course of ages, worn for itself among the giant ranges of the Hindu-Kush. The muffled thunder of huge boulders being rolled along its rocky bed by the tempestuous flood can be heard for miles. On either hand vast masses of mountains rise up till their snowy peaks appear at an infinite height to meet the sky. The lower slopes, called in Eastern idiom the "skirts of the mountains," have comparatively gentler and rounder outlines, but as they rise they become steeper and more rugged till, vegetation left far below, the line of eternal snow is reached—a desolate region of ice-fields and glaciers, stupendous precipices and glittering peaks.

Cascading down the habitable lower slopes are numberless rivulets fed from the snows above. Seen from high up the opposite side of the valley, there first appear below the snow tiny threads of silver winding through arid slopes of talus. Some 5000 feet above the river strips of light green appear, little fields out in terraces in which the young barley is just beginning to show itself. A few huts are seen lower down and some gaunt poplars, a cold and dreary upland country. Farther down, the strip of

green darkens in colour and gradually broadens, chestnut, apricot, and gum trees appear, at first scattered but becoming more numerous, till, at the river's edge, the cultivated fan spreads out to a couple of miles or more in breadth, a variegated mass of golden corn, orchards and vineyards, with the little villages half hidden in foliage. Often two or more of these fans join, forming bands of verdure some miles in length. Chitral itself is composed of several of such fans merged into one, and most of the villages of Chitral are of the same type. In the south of Chitral, where the rainfall is greater, the hillsides, at elevations favourable to the growth of conifers, are clothed in pine forests, and the scenery is consequently less wild and more alpine in character.

Let us make a closer inspection of one of these Chitrali villages. It is entered by a bridle-path, across which a merry little brooklet zigzags from side to side in independent fashion, serving to conduct the water of the neighbouring streams to the lower cultivated terraces. Magnificent horse-chestnut trees cast a shadow delightful to the traveller after the heat and glare of the bare hillside, and the air is filled with the murmur of running water and the scent brought out of foliage by a burning sun. On either side the path are walled enclosures, and a stranger, by

standing up in his stirrups, can see over into one of the Chitrali gardens famed all over the Western Himalayas. It is in reality more an orchard than a garden, but one with exquisitely kept turf. At one end is the flat-roofed house belonging to the owner, and farther off the buildings which give shelter, if he be of the upper class, to his serfs. Presently he will arrive at an open space where, sitting on raised seats round a gigantic chestnut, the greybeards of the village sit and discuss the latest doings in Chitral. Farther on, the polo-ground is entered, a long, narrow, rectangular enclosure, with walled sides, at present deserted but for a party of lusty urchins who are playing the national game on foot.

My camp had, the evening before, been pitched in one of the gardens surrounding the castle belonging to the lord of the manor. Taking leave of it with regret, I rode out through a narrow door into the paved courtyard, and a few yards farther found myself in the polo-ground. The Mehtar and his retinue were already approaching from the farther end, preceded by the pipers of the village. The Mehtar himself, a plain but not unpleasing looking boy of eighteen, was dressed simply, as was his wont, in the usual Chitrali *choga*¹ and rolled cap, but made of the exquisite silky homespun that is reserved for the royal house. He was mounted on a handsome Arab

that had been presented to him at his installation, after the close of the disturbances of 1895. His equipment is of the latest Badakshan fashion. The saddle is covered with red velvet worked with gold embroidery, and the arch, crupper, and breastplate glittering with plates of silver. Slung by a loop to his wrist is the usual silver-mounted Yarkandi whip. His dress is finished off by long crinkled boots, the foot part of which is formed of a separate pair of high-heeled and square-toed slippers, which can easily be discarded on entering a house. His attendants and courtiers are more gaily attired in Bokhara silks and velvets, made for the most part in Russia, with gold-embroidered turbans and high Afghan boots. They are excellently mounted on the breedy-looking animals that are imported from Badakshan, and are known by this name, though actually bred in the Khatgan district of Afghan Turkestan. At a short distance behind are the men-at-arms forming the Mehtar's bodyguard, an irregular lot of footmen, armed with Snider rifles, and dressed, each one, according to his own fancy. The *mir-shikar*, or head falconer, is also in attendance with a magnificent peregrine on his wrist, and another attendant with a leash of greyhounds, the "Tazi" hounds that used to form part of the tribute to the Suzerain State of Kashmir. Most gorgeous of all, perhaps, is the court tailor, who has

¹ *Choga*, a loose robe of homespun.

evidently been given *carte blanche* in the framing of his own dress regulations, and had simply run riot in gold-lace and brass fittings.

After the usual salutations and inquiries, we started off on the short march which would bring us to the next camp, preceded by the pipes, which echoed and re-echoed through the valley in the cold morning air. As to the road itself, it was as bad as Chitrali roads usually are. About a foot broad, up hills so steep that a firm grasp of the mane is not only an assistance but a necessity, and down hills at such an angle that there appears nothing in front but an empty void; often one foot hanging over a sheer drop of hundreds of feet, along crazy wooden galleries hanging on to walls of rock, through the chinks in which the river can be seen boiling below. It is a Chitrali's "swagger" never to dismount where a pony can get a foothold at all; and some of the places where a Chitrali pony can go would turn the quadruped that some years ago used to perform under the name of the Blondin donkey sick with fear. Riding along a Chitrali road is therefore not an amusement for people with nerves. The road is not all like this, however, —often it winds on the level through fields and villages, orchards and vineyards. It is variety that pleases, and here one can often experience three of the seasons in a single day. Where, high up, the road creeps along the mountain-side at a dizzy elevation above the river,

whose roar is borne faintly upwards on the breeze, it is early spring, with snow lying in patches here and there and the young barley just beginning to show its head: 2000 feet lower one is in the land of blossoms, and the air is full of the scent of flowers and the hum of innumerable bees busy among wild roses such as are seen nowhere else; while down close to the roaring river crops are being cut, and the apricot-trees are breaking with their golden load. Chitral, indeed, is in summer the realisation of the poet's ideal—

"A joyous land,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees
grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue."

It is along such a road that our cavalcade wound through the country-side. In the van were the drums and pipes, the Mehtar's bodyguard following, all playing in turn and keeping up a song with chorus, one after another taking up the air. This lasted from start to finish.

"The players go before, the minstrels
follow after."

In the midst, unfortunately, were no "damsels playing on timbrels." A few years ago there might have been, but the retirement of the ladies of Chitral from public view took place almost simultaneously with the appearance of an Indian force of occupation in the country. The introduction of the hateful *pardah* system into Chitral is the first sign of the disappearance

of local colour and customs which is bound to take place in the hot grasp of Anglo-India.

The time and tune kept by our minstrels were excellent, and though the air was oriental the effect some little distance behind was not unpleasing. When the nature of the ground permitted, one or two of the minstrels would step aside and execute a *pas* on the side of the road. One magnificent young chap with a jolly sunburnt face, black eyes, red lips, and a wide laughing mouth displaying a magnificent set of teeth, dressed in dirty white robes with a brilliant chintz jacket, particularly attracted my attention. Absolutely unconscious of himself, and perfectly happy, he revelled in the extravagant postures of the dance, and shouted from pure joy of living.

The passion these people have for music and dancing is extraordinary, and this not as a spectacle, like the emasculated Indian, but as a pastime. They are peculiar also among Eastern peoples for their love of flowers: young and old bind flowers in their rolled caps, their favourites being roses or the delightfully scented eleagnus that is so common in Chitral. It frequently happened on the march that a shout would make us look up to see a barelegged goat-herd come flying down the hill with an offering of marvellously scented roses, white, red, and yellow.

We were nearing our camp for the day when a horseman appeared coming towards us accompanied by a single attend-

ant. Presently, coming closer, he dismounted, and running forward salaamed low to the Mehtar. Rather mock humility I am afraid; it was Shazada Lais, the leading *pir* of the Mughli sect of Mohammedans of these parts. He numbered half Chitral among his disciples, and lived in a style not inferior to the chief himself, the "turbulent priest" that so often figures in history. Originally a political refugee from over the border, he had been given land in one of the northern valleys in Chitral, and from the first wielded tremendous influence among all classes of Chitralis that belonged to the Rafizi persuasion, and not altogether unnaturally, seeing that their hopes of salvation rested entirely on his good offices with the Creator. And so he had come to be a thorn in the sides of his benefactors. A clever man, but no ascetic. He was, no doubt, in agreement with the "friar of orders grey," who gave out as his firm belief that living a good life, and living well, were much the same thing.

And now, rounding a corner, we saw a crowd of people massed on a gentle eminence over which the road ran some seven or eight hundred yards farther on. A curious undulating motion appeared to animate them, and the faint sounds of a chorus reached our ears. Approaching nearer, we saw the swaying mass in the middle of the crowd to be a number of men linked tightly together arm in arm performing a grotesque dance, every fifth step

of which they almost sank down to the ground, keeping time the while with their voices. This song and dance is reserved for receptions of the Chitrali chief. The rest of the crowd, lined up on either side of the dancers, discharged their matchlocks in the air, holding their pieces at the "port." Farther on we found the road thronged with sightseers, the countryside being evidently *en fête*. Near the entrance to the village a company of old dames blocked the road, each one carrying a bowl of milk and sugar. As we approached the leading lady advanced, stirring vigorously with a big wooden spoon, apparently wishing to feed her royal master; but she was repulsed not unkindly and retired. The crowd now closed round, our bridles were seized, and we were conducted to the polo-ground. Here opposite the dais a tall pole had been erected, to the top of which was attached a small silver gourd filled with sand. To the thunder of the drums horseman after horseman darted past at full speed—now a noble in rustling silk and glittering silver accoutrements, now a retainer in modest homespun, each discharging his piece at the mark. As the matchlocks frequently hung or missed fire, and were then, after passing the pole indiscriminately, whirled round the rider's head, a prudent man will, when the pastime is indulged in, get behind the nearest tree, or even behind a stout friend. Four or five had passed without hitting the

mark, when a cousin of the Mehtar's, who had distinguished himself during the siege of Chitral by his skill in picking off men in the fort from the high ground on the opposite bank of the river, came past with a double-barrelled breech-loader. A puff of dust from the gourd answered his shot; the crowd shouted, the pole was pulled up, and we were conducted to our respective camps. Mine was in the grounds of the castle on a stretch of turf shaded by magnificent plane-trees. A Chitrali garden is no garden as understood in England: there are no flower-beds, and except in the month of fruit blossoms, no masses of colour,—merely soft green turf, running water, and deep cool shade. A few wild hyacinths growing by the side of the water suffice to give a touch of subdued colour in accordance with the restful spirit of the scene; for, whatever may be the necessity for colour under dull skies, there are few that have experienced the brightness and glare of the orient that would feel disposed to criticise the Eastern preference for green turf, rippling water, and deep cool shade.

Except during the extreme heat of the day the garden resounds with the song of birds: one can recognise the note of the thrush and the deep mellow pipe of the golden oriole, and sometimes catch a glimpse of him as like a streak of flame he darts among the branches.

The day passed, no matter whether in the *dolce far niente* due to the presiding deity of

the place or the everlasting *daftar*¹ which makes the Anglo-Indian official a standing wonder to the oriental mind. One incident, however, characteristic of the people, must be related.

An old man came into the garden, and after the usual salaams, explained that he was a native of Mastuj, a district not under the Mehtar's rule. He had not very wisely married a young wife, who a few days ago had eloped with a noble who was a subject of the Mehtar. I explained my sympathy with his misfortunes, but didn't see in what way I could assist, as it was his own special privilege to hunt the guilty couple down and slay them. Oh, he explained, I could help him very materially,—his wife and her paramour were now concealed within this very castle walls: as for killing them, he desired no such thing; all he wanted was for the erring wife to be handed over to him, when all would be forgiven and the lady received back into his own home. But by doing so, it was explained to him, he would forfeit the right of taking revenge on the ruiner of his home, as the universal rule among the tribesmen of the North-West is that they must kill both parties or neither. Revenge, it appeared, however, was far from his thoughts; all he wanted was his own wife. The owner of the castle was accordingly summoned. On being apprised of the reason he had been "remembered,"

"Certainly," he said, "the young *Adamzada* [noble] and his lady have now been under my roof these three days; if the old man wishes their death it is his right, but to surrender the girl—such dishonour could not be supported: the young couple, too, are willing to die together, but they will not be parted."

From the expressions of the bystanders it was plain that the errant lovers had their entire sympathies. A man so mean-spirited as to forego revenge and ask for the restitution of his wife was beyond the pale altogether. At this moment the old man, now shedding bitter tears, was joined by some more patriarchs from his own district, who added to the clamour, and begged for the restoration of the girl, otherwise, they said, all their young wives would be carried off by Chitrali *Adamzadas*, and things would be as they were in the days of the old Mehtars, when the serf had no rights.

This was a conundrum: to regard the lady as a chattel, to be handed back to her husband irrespective of her own wishes, was repugnant to English ideas; on the other hand, Chitrali nobles could not be allowed to carry off the wives of their Mastuj neighbours with impunity. It was indeed awkward, this lack of bloodthirstiness on the part of the husband. There was no "local custom" to meet such a case. A happy thought here occurred, to hand

¹ *Daftar*, office work.

the case over to the *Kazi*¹ to decide, and no sooner thought of than done. In the evening he returned to pronounce judgment. This was, after the requisite number of quotations from the Koran had been rolled off, that both the lady and her paramour, having been guilty of the crime of adultery, should be stoned to death,—a truly Gilbertian sentence, that made even the Chitralis shout with laughter, though the *Kazi's* countenance remained unmoved.

To cut a long story short, I finally decreed that the husband should have his wish and his wife. I afterwards heard that the forgiven wife went off quite happily with her lawful spouse, not indeed repentant, but shrieking with laughter at the thought of her spree; while her Lothario in an agony of woe stabbed himself about the breast, not so deeply, however, as to do any more material injury to his already lacerated heart.

The dub-dub of the kettle-drums and the skirl of the pipes began to sound on the polo-ground about four o'clock, summoning every one to the national game. In Chitral and the adjacent countries every village has its polo-ground, in spite of the fact that there is frequently but barely sufficient cultivated land to support the inhabitants. Every one that possesses a pony plays, and those that have not risen to this height of affluence play on foot. The game as played in

the Himalayas has been so often described that I will not do so here. Suffice it to say that though the glimpses of the players a stranger to the game may catch, amid the clouds of dust, give but a confused impression of a *mêlée* of wild horsemen, with hair and garments streaming in the wind, shouting, galloping madly, recklessly here and there, accompanied by the clash of sticks and the click of the hit ball, and the constant accompanying crescendo and diminuendo of the band, the game is really played with a very high degree of skill. The force and accuracy with which these hill-men hit on both sides the pony is certainly not exceeded anywhere.

The best ponies are those from Khatgan, a province belonging to the Amir of Kabul—strong, wiry little beasts, with wonderful stamina, whose reputation extends over the greater part of Central Asia.

The game lasts till one or other side has obtained nine goals, during which time no periods of rest are called and ponies may not be changed. It is not surprising, therefore, that in this country the quality most prized in a pony is staying power.

Once at the annual Highland games at Gilgit a pony race-course was laid out five miles in length, but this was objected to by many of the competitors on the ground that it was too short to bring a good pony to

¹ A dignitary of the religion of Islam, who generally exercises judicial powers.

the front, and so it had to be lengthened!

The polo over, a hollow square is formed in front of the strand, and dancing begins. Before the professionals have their turn the losers at polo have to dance for the amusement of the crowd. They generally affect the greatest reluctance to do so, and though there are few Chitralis that are not really proficient, a forced performance of this sort causes them unlimited shame, and they kick up their heels and wave their arms in an exaggerated failure to imitate the more or less graceful dance of the country. Chitralis of even the highest rank are not excused, and officials holding appointments corresponding to those of Lord Salisbury and Lord Roberts may be seen capering about for the edification of the crowd. Sometimes instead of dancing they have to pay forfeit. I once saw the Mehtar's foster-brother, a fine handsome youth in big Afghan boots and a flowing robe of Bokhara silk, decline to dance. He was accordingly made to stand on a high stone, his cap was doffed for him, and the crier, addressing himself to the crowd of women that lined the walls, proclaimed in a loud voice, "Oh ladies, here you see the Mehtar's own foster-brother, a beautiful youth that we hear is more at home in the boudoir than he is on the polo-ground." Professional dancing followed, and by the time all was over the sun was sunk behind the purple mountains, a faint rosy light only lingering on the highest

snow-peaks; by-and-by this also faded and grew cold, the call to evening prayer resounded, flocks straggled in, and with darkness a silence fell over the whole village.

To-night, however, there was to be an assembly in the big house, and the post-prandial cigarette had barely been lighted when the sound of the kettle-drums again arose within the walls and the grey-bearded *aksakal* (warder) came to conduct me to the assembly.

Passing from the garden into the castle by a narrow postern, I was conducted through a maze of narrow passages and small chambers. Most of these were empty, but in some men-at-arms were stretched out in sleep, while one had living occupants in the shape of half-a-dozen hawks on their perches, blinking their eyes at the sudden light; their attendants, never far from their beloved charges, sitting chatting in an adjoining chamber.

We found the central courtyard lighted by bonfires and torches made of strips of flaming pitch-pine. The Mehtar and his company were already seated on carpets, forming one side of a square, the other three sides of which were filled in by a miscellaneous Chitrali crowd, in the centre of all being a large fire. After being seated and inquiring with the greatest *empressement* after each other's health, although we had parted barely two hours ago, the performance began. The first item was a masque, Pathan traders *en route* to India robbed by Kafirs.

The traders are passing with their animals along the deserted road, evening falls, loads are taken off. Being pious followers of Islam, prayer-carpets are spread, and having "fixed their attention," after which they should have been oblivious to all mundane matters, they become absorbed in their devotions. Their absorption, however, does not prevent their looking round every now and then to guard against the approach of their hereditary enemies the Kafirs—a want of trust in Providence that is received with shouts of laughter by the Chitrali audience, who "care for none of these things."

When they are asleep, bare-foot Kafirs come on dancing and loot the caravan. Pursuit follows, the Kafirs are surrounded by Afghan troops and killed, and the soldiers walk off with the spoil, no doubt a frequent ending to such episodes in real life.

Dancing then began. One after another the trained dancing-boys stepped into the square, performed their tolerably graceful gyrations in the flickering light of the torches, and retired into the darkness. The scene was a picturesque one: in front the rows of dark, wild faces, lighted up by the wavering light, which could barely penetrate the gloom of the surrounding walls. The light was just sufficient to reveal a projecting balcony screened by trellis-work, behind which, no doubt, the ladies of the castle had a good view of

the goings-on. The sky formed a canopy above us, into the star-spangled square of which the smoke from the fires curled steadily upwards in the still air.

The performers on these occasions are invariably of the male sex, the best being the dancing-boys that form part of the household of every Chitrali of position. Unlike Pathans, in whose eyes dancing is, to say the least, undignified, Chitralis all dance, and, like Western nations, think no shame of it. The "principal boy" this evening was the servant of the *Mehtarjau*,¹ who was our host and the proprietor of the castle, a slight handsome boy with his hair dressed in curls, after the Persian fashion. The *Mehtarjau*, who was sitting next to me, and was himself considered in Chitral a poet and musician of no mean order, was evidently very proud of him, and when his turn was finished was at pains to explain that he was nervous at so many spectators, and had not been dancing up to his true form. I was happily able to remember a verse from Hafiz appropriate to the occasion, and he sat back with a satisfied smile.

The dancers having all retired, music began. The band consisted of some six or eight string instruments made from yellow gourds, rather like the zither in shape, and two tambourines without the jingle. The singers were three in number, all tenors. Swaying their bodies to and fro, and keeping

¹ A member of royalty.

time with a gentle clapping of the hands, they soon got into the swing of the Chitrali *gazal*, and with half closed eyes became lost to external things. The general effect is not bad if listened to in the way all Eastern music should be, or rather not listened to,—for the art of enjoying the music of the orient is to assume an absolutely passive attitude and allow the sounds to be borne into one's ears without the mental effort of listening.

After one rather pleasing air the *Mehtarjau* inclined himself towards me.

"My own composition," he whispered.

I congratulated him. This scion of nobility was himself

an excellent performer on the sitar, and delighted the audience later on by himself taking the instrument in hand, and producing some very good effects out of it.

"Call not his sitar a gourd," says a Persian poet, "but a golden bowl, filled to the brim with the wine of song."

Refreshments were brought, and the evening wore on. For my part, remembering that I had to march on the morrow, and that a Chitrali *bazam*¹ lasts till morning, I left the company early and was lulled to sleep in my tent in the garden by the faint sound of music, continued, no doubt, till the flush of the false dawn.

R. L. KENNION.

¹ *Bazam*, pleasure assembly.

LORD HOWE'S VICTORY.

THE 1st of June has been made memorable to us this year by the welcome news of the end of a war. It was already illustrious in our history, for on that date in 1794 Lord Howe reaped the just reward of four days spent in strenuous manœuvring to bring on a battle, and of resolute partial conflict, by gaining over the French fleet of M. Villaret-Joyeuse a victory wherein fortune had no share. Posterity and his own service have been less than just to Lord Howe. They have compared his triumph with what it was in the power of our admirals to do after him. Because Camperdown, the Nile, and Trafalgar brought more utter destruction to the enemy, because St Vincent was won against greater odds, he has been counted a smaller man, and his victory has been belittled. An unhappy phrase of Nelson's has been quoted, to define "a Lord Howe victory" as being far below what the British navy might and should achieve. But no worse standard than the completeness of the victory, taken apart from all consideration of the originality shown by the conqueror and the quality of the enemy, could possibly be applied. If it is to be accepted, then Bessières did a greater thing when he routed a mob of undrilled Spaniards led by the most incapable of recorded generals, Don Gregorio de la Cuesta, at Rioseco, than was

done by the Duke at Salamanca, or Napoleon at Craonne. The test is often applied, but it is wholly fallacious, and deserves no better treatment than the *reductio ad absurdum*. The advance a man makes beyond his predecessors gives the measure of his originality. We are to estimate his achievement by the quality of his force, and of his enemy. When judged in this, the only critical, way, Lord Howe's victory is seen to be a very marvellous one indeed. And it has the peculiar distinction that the originality was shown by an old man trained in an outworn school.

A few words, which shall be as plain and untechnical as may be, must be said of that old school and of its principles. From the last quarter of the seventeenth century till Howe's victory, a British admiral had been bound by the Fighting Instructions, first enlarged by the Duke of York, afterwards King James II., from the orders of the Commonwealth admirals, and then modified from time to time. They made it incumbent on him to marshal his fleet one ship following another in the "line of battle," and then to keep them so throughout the fighting. The result was that the formation was elevated from being a means of bringing ships into action together, and was made into an end in itself. Rodney had indeed broken his line on the 12th April 1782 in

the battle called by us of Dominica, and by the French the Saints, but only when he saw the enemy already in disorder. He did not break them by his own attack, and indeed decided to profit by their confusion late, after hesitation, and on the eager appeal of his captain of the fleet, Sir Charles Douglas. Howe manœuvred to throw the enemy out of order, and reduced "the line" from its usurped position to its proper place as a mere method of bringing the ships into battle. The reader who may wish to understand "the line" fully is referred to the treatise of Clerk of Eldin on Naval Tactics. It will tell him more of our sea fighting in the eighteenth century than he will learn from any naval historian proper. The conclusion of the whole matter is very simple. Our admirals were tied down to fight in a prescribed way. As the French were perfectly well acquainted with the routine, they could always slip from a close action, save in the few cases where our numbers were much superior, or they were caught, as at Quiberon, in flight, and on a lee shore. The intellectual and moral greatness of Howe were shown in this, that he broke away from a stupid tradition, not in mere impatience, but deliberately, thoughtfully, preserving all the good of the old order, and using it with intelligent energy.

It would be pleasant, if space permitted, to dwell on his past services. He had sailed with Anson as a boy, though the ship he served in was not able to round the Horn. He

fought under Boscawen and Hawke; as admiral on the North American station he baffled a far superior French force in 1778 by a most remarkable combination of foresight and calculated daring. He directed the final relief of Gibraltar with an ill-manned and worse fitted fleet. Barrow's Life tells exactly how he descended from George I. From his portrait it can be seen that he inherited the type of the House of Brunswick, and he had all their solidity of character and unshakable valour. There was something in his character which lent itself to ridicule, for he was very simple, and at times inarticulate. His orders were apt to be obscure, and his explanations, given with unfailing patience, more obscure still. So at least we are told, though it is hard to believe that an officer who commanded so much and so successfully can have failed often to make his subordinates understand what was expected of them. It was not the least of his qualities that he was phlegmatic. His day's work done, and all his duty punctually performed, he would fall tranquilly asleep, leaving the unforeseen and the possible blunders of subordinates to be dealt with as they occurred. When the great Revolutionary War began he and Samuel Hood were the recognised chiefs of the navy. Hood went to the Mediterranean, and Howe to the command in the Channel.

It would be one of the great-

est of mistakes to suppose that either the fleet he led or the enemy he had to deal with were as yet what the naval forces of Britain and France were to become in the course of the next five years. Ours was still raw. The French, in spite of the Revolution, still retained not a little of the skill and confidence they had possessed in the American war. Our custom in the eighteenth century was to cut the fleet down to the quick as soon as peace was signed. The men were paid off by tens of thousands, the officers cut adrift by the thousand. The younger of the officers often turned to other lines of life, while the great majority of the elder men saw no service till the fighting began again. Then everything had to be done afresh. Prime seamen had to be secured by the press from the merchant service, mostly by taking them out of the home-coming ships at sea even when they were suffering from scurvy—the usual consequence in those times of a long voyage. These prime seamen, who were the indispensable skilled men of the navy, were trained in seamanship in the merchant service. They formed much the smaller part of the crews. Vagabonds, who, like the real sailors, were subject to the press, prisoners drafted or permitted to volunteer from the jails, miscellaneous landmen and marines, made up the crews. When the navy had to be brought by rapid successive bounds from a peace establishment of 16,000 to a

war footing of 40,000, 80,000, or 100,000 and upwards, there could not but be a long interval of confusion. Officers who had grown rusty in peace, reinforced by sailors promoted from before the mast for no other qualification than their practical seamanship—the one thing indispensable in the sailing fleet—were engaged in reducing a mob to order. Three or four years were required to bring the fleet to a state of real efficiency. It is obvious that the admiral who had to command while the process was going on was by no means in the position of his fortunate colleague who took the fleet when it was formed, or had had ample time to bring it into shape. In 1793, and for four years afterwards, the fleet was seething with discontent. The crews had many excuses for anger at the treatment they received. It required the sharp lesson of the mutinies of 1797 to rouse the Government to a sense of what was owing to the men. Writers who compare Howe's policy in '93 and '94 with Jervis's blockade of Brest, and the 1st June with the battle of the Nile, forget the manifest fact that armed forces by sea or land are not chessmen with fixed powers. They are very subtle things, perfected out of good material by leadership, by sane treatment, by opportunity, by experience of the enemy. And there is that in them which escapes all analysis. Let it not be forgotten that Duncan, Jervis, and Nelson did not

command the same fleet as Howe—nor did they face the same enemy.

The corps of French naval officers formed by Colbert for Louis XIV. was hated unspeakably for its insolence. It had been shattered to pieces by the Revolution, but the work it had done in training the fleet was not wholly lost. When the war began in 1793 much of the old skill remained. Nor had the confidence of the French seamen been lost by long years of hiding in port and the depressing influence of defeat. At that time, too, the Jacobin fever was at its height. In its ultimate influence it was ruinous; but for the time it nerved all Frenchmen to furious exertions. The captains of the guns in the Republican fleet were still the men we had had to recognise as equal to our own in the American war. The Terrorists were driving officers and crews with fierce energy. We laughed at Jean Bon St André, and, to be candid, we told lies about him. But the delegate of the Mountain, who sailed with Villaret-Joyeuse, was by no means an absurd figure. He had character and resolution; neither was it at all a small matter that there should be a representative of the State on the flagship, whose function was not to play the part of Marlborough's Dutch deputies, and hold the leader back, but to urge him on. One fact is enough to show that the enemy of 1794 was not as the enemy of 1805. When the final battle came, on the 1st

June, it had been preceded by four days of manœuvring and partial conflict. Yet the fleet of Villaret-Joyeuse was in excellent order, and confident. At Trafalgar the allied French and Spaniards were thrown into utter confusion by merely reversing their order, so that the ships' heads might point to Cadiz. They knew they were beaten before the battle began, and their want of skill justified their want of belief in themselves.

When Lord Howe sailed from St Helens on the 2nd May 1794, he had a fleet not yet confirmed in discipline, and reliance on fully proved superiority. As was the custom then, he was to take with him a convoy of merchant-ships, and see it clear of the Channel. Britain lived by commerce, and could not afford to risk the safety of its merchant-ships. All through the eighteenth century the admiral who went to sea with a fleet took the trade with him. The obligation to see it on its way was a killing addition to his other burdens. Our commerce was carried almost wholly in little tubs square in the bow, and a third as broad as they were long, leewardly, slow (an average of three knots an hour was their usual rate of sailing), commanded by skippers who were often sulky, and always recalcitrant to the control of the naval officers. To get them all out "from behind the Mother Bank," and shepherd them till they were beyond the Scilly Isles, was a task requiring infinite patience, when not only the stupid and

ill-conditioned human animal and the awkward vessel had to be managed, but the tides and the winds. After heart-breaking delays it was done. Metternich, then Secretary to the Austrian Embassy in London, came down to see the sight, and begged Howe to take him to sea. The Admiral, who would not have known what to do with a Secretary of Embassy, declined, with many polite assurances of care for his visitor's safety. One regrets it, for an account of the cruise by such an observer would have been worth having. From the top of Afton Down, Metternich saw the fleet and convoy go out by both ends of the Isle of Wight, and came away profoundly impressed. From the mouth of the Channel the merchant-ships were sent on under the protection of Admiral Montagu, with six sail of the line, who was to see them beyond Cape Finisterre, and then to return to cruise between Cape Ortugal and Belleisle. Having provided for the trade, the admiral turned to his ultimate duty.

This ultimate duty was neither to blockade nor to give battle to the French Brest fleet. The bad harvest of 1793 and the general disorganisation of the country by the Revolution had brought France in sight of starvation. The Committee of Public Safety had purchased large quantities of grain in America, and it was known to be coming over. The British Government advanced the claim to treat food as contraband of war, and hoped

by seizing the convoy, consisting mainly of American vessels, to reduce France to submission by hunger. Captain Mahan has argued that it would have been better to wait for our prey outside the American ports. But this would have been impossible. We could not send the bulk of our naval force across the Atlantic while the fleet of Villaret-Joyeuse was lying ready to sail at Brest. A small force would not have done, for the French had sent Admiral Vanstabel to act as guard to the grain-ships. He left America with his charge on the 11th April. On the day before Admiral Nielly had sailed from Brest with five sail of the line to meet him at sea. A strict blockade of the French naval port would have served the main purpose little or not at all. Some one of the numerous sloops and privateers under the French flag would assuredly have carried warning that the road was occupied, and the convoy would have turned to other harbours. Howe therefore had no course open to him but to cruise on the route the convoy might be expected to cross. Meanwhile he had to watch Brest and the fleet of Villaret-Joyeuse, lest it should interrupt him. It was a double duty, and one no officer could be sure of performing by any exercise of care. In the end Howe missed the convoy because he was occupied in destroying the French fleet. He looked into Brest on the 5th May, and

saw Villaret-Joyeuse still there. Then he went on to the route of the convoy, and swept again back to Brest. On the 19th he was off the port and saw it empty. Villaret-Joyeuse had sailed on the 16th. The two fleets crossed in a fog on the 17th—so close that the sound of the bells struck on Howe's ships as fog-signals were heard by the French.

Meanwhile our convoy from Newfoundland, under the protection of Captain Thomas Troubridge of the *Castor* frigate, had fallen into the hands of Nielly. He put prize-crews into them, and sent them on their way to French ports. Several were retaken by Montagu, who thus learnt that Nielly was on his way to join Vanstabel and the corn convoy. He at once sailed in the direction he expected to find them, despatching an appeal to Howe for reinforcements, for his six liners would have been overmatched by the united forces of Nielly and Vanstabel, amounting as they did to ten. Howe at once steered to join his subordinate, who, as he saw, was in some danger of meeting the Brest fleet. On the 21st May he also recaptured several prizes. They belonged to a convoy of the Dutch, then our allies, and had fallen into the hands of Villaret-Joyeuse. It was a great error on the part of the French officers that they did not sink their prizes, but endeavoured to have them carried into harbour, though they knew that Howe was between them and their country, and ought to have seen how likely it was

that some of them would be recaptured. This is one of the many cases in naval history where officers were misled by the hope of securing prize-money into acts of military indiscretion. They gave their opponent priceless information. From the prisoners Howe learnt that the French were close to him to the westward, and believing that Montagu was too far to the south to be in immediate danger from the Brest fleet, he went at once in pursuit of Villaret-Joyeuse.

The truth that the sea is the best of hiding-places was never better demonstrated than in this campaign. Vanstabel and his convoy were coming from the west with the wind behind them. Nielly was beating to windward between the 45th and 46th parallels to join them. Montagu was coming behind in pursuit. To the north of all three Villaret-Joyeuse was cruising on the look-out for the convoy coming from the west, and for Howe, who was to the east of him. Two other small French squadrons were at sea in the gulf. Vessels were detached by accident or design, and fell in with friends or sighted enemies. Yet all had but the vaguest information as to the whereabouts one of the others. Howe has been blamed for detaching Montagu and for not ordering him to rejoin the flag. But he had to see the trade beyond Finisterre, and to intercept the grain convoy. To spread his fleet was the best way he could find of cutting across its route. Moreover, he knew that the

twenty-six sail of the line he retained under his command were quite capable of dealing with the French fleet from Brest, which he now set himself to discover and to defeat.

From the 21st to the 28th May Howe was searching on the sea, where the passage of an enemy leaves no trace. Then in the early morning of the 28th, the wind blowing briskly from south by west, the French were seen directly to windward, so far off that their topsails were mere flecks on the horizon line. The fleets were in 47°34' N. and 13°39' W. —that is to say, farther out on the ocean than the most westerly point of Ireland, and nearly due westward from Brest. From the moment Villaret-Joyeuse was seen, Howe allowed the capture of the convoy to sink into a very subordinate place in his mind. It was the guiding rule of our admirals that when a French fleet was in view it was to be brought to battle, and that all else was of comparatively small importance. With the French the rule was to use the fleet to cover some ultimate object, and to avoid rather than to seek battle. Each admiral acted in the spirit of his own service — Howe to force on action, and Villaret-Joyeuse to draw his enemy away from the route of the convoy. So while the Englishman strained in pursuit, the Frenchman kept his wind, and stood out farther into the ocean.

Now Howe gave a remarkable proof of his superiority to his immediate predecessors. In the

eighteenth century, and in such a position, a British admiral did one of two things. He either kept his fleet in a line, which condemned him to move at the rate of his most sluggish ship, or he ordered a general chase —that is to say, he let every vessel go at her best speed, which threw his fleet into confusion, a very dangerous thing to do in presence of an enemy of equal numbers. The belief that no other course was open was deeply rooted. So able a man as Jervis, afterwards Earl St Vincent, declared in the American war that it was impossible to force battle on an enemy to windward unless he committed a gross blunder. Howe proved that it was quite possible. He formed a detached squadron of quick-sailing ships under Rear-Admiral Pasley, while keeping the bulk of his fleet in good order as a support. The detached squadron was to hold the enemy or draw him down to a general battle. In taking this course Howe reverted to the method recommended by the Spanish naval writer Alonso de Chaves as far back as the reign of Charles V., and to the example of the Commonwealth Admirals and Generals at sea. But every student of naval history knows that there had been a great fall from the standard of the middle seventeenth century, and that the vigour of the great chiefs of the Revolutionary war was a reversion to the forgotten practice of the earlier men. It was late before Admiral Pasley could bring the rear of

the French line to action, and most of the firing took place in the gathering dark. One French vessel, the *Révolutionnaire*, was beaten out of her fleet. One English, the *Audacious*, had her rigging cut to pieces. Both had to limp home as best they could.

On the 29th the fleets were close together, only some six miles apart, and sailing parallel to one another, the French being to windward still. The better average seamanship of our fleet gave us an advantage in the game of working to windward, and there was a chance that we would come to close quarters. The French admiral allowed his van to come down to within distant cannon-shot of ours, in the hope of crippling the rigging of some of them, and then making off. The manœuvre would probably have succeeded to perfection against Pocock, Keppel, or Rodney, who would have feared to disorder their line. It was turned into a disaster by Howe. Reverting, unconsciously, for our naval history had been scandalously forgotten, to the tactics of Monk in the great battle with Tromp off the Texel in 1652, he ordered his van to tack, and by standing on the opposite order from the French, to gain the power of cutting through their line from leeward, and so winning the weather-gage, and with it the initiative. He was very ill-obeyed by the ships in the van, which turned before the wind to bring themselves on the new tack. Then, seeing that the French might slip away if he

let his van lead, Howe stood out of the line himself, and cut through the enemy near the rear. With his flag to guide them his captains followed. The French admiral, who also showed a commendable independence of old pedantry, turned to support the ships of his rear division. Thus the two fleets swung round one another in two confused swarms. Villaret-Joyeuse rescued the vessels cut off from his fleet, but he lost the weather-gage, and with it the power of avoiding close battle.

The shock was delayed for two days. Fog swept over the fleets. In the breaks which occurred from time to time they had sight of their opponents; but it was not till the evening of the 31st that we had clear view of the French close to us and to leeward, for the wind kept in the south and west, and Howe retained the advantage he had won on the 29th. After his experience on that day he was not minded to fight a night battle, when the dark would give cover to stupidity and want of spirit. So he sailed quietly side by side with the French, telling off frigates to watch them the while. On the morning of Sunday, 1st June, on a calm sea and in a pleasant wind, they were under his lee and a little on his bow. There was no getting off for them, and having earned his battle by good management, the Admiral was minded to reap his harvest methodically, and to the full as far as in him lay. Four days of strain had taxed his crews,

and they would need all their strength for the work before them. Therefore, like the solid and thoughtful chief he was, Howe gave animal human nature its just due. He ordered the fleet to lie to and eat its breakfast. Then, just about the time that the bells were ringing the congregations to church at home, as Collingwood, then captain of the *Barfleur*, pointed out to his chief, Admiral Bowyer, the British fleet bore down on the enemy. In numbers the two forces were equal,—twenty-six on each side,—with a slight advantage in broadside guns and weight of ordnance for the French, but a better average of skill for us. And in war all is but of little value as compared to skill. Some of the ships of Villaret-Joyeuse had parted company during the last four days, but he had been joined by Nielly with a portion of his squadron.

The main element of superiority in the British fleet was to be found in the fact that it was commanded by an officer who was resolved to make a real battle, and not to allow himself to be tied down by the old Fighting Instructions. According to them, he ought to have sailed down on the French, to have engaged them on the windward side, and to have kept his formation unaltered so long as the action lasted. If he had done so, the probabilities are that the battle would have been as indecisive as the list of its predecessors in the eighteenth century. The French would have fired high to dam-

age the rigging of our ships, and when they had crippled some of them, would have escaped to leeward. Howe had resolved to make this impossible by sailing right in among them, and so producing a *mêlée*. We do not know by what steps he had reached late in life the intention to set the example of a revolutionary disregard of the former orthodox method of fighting. There is a story that he had given a very cool reception to the pamphlets in which Clerk of Eldin had argued for a new system of tactics. He said that they were no doubt most ingenious, but that for his part he "would keep to the old way." On the 1st June he departed from it very widely. The guiding thought with Clerk had been, that since our crews were on the whole better seamen and better gunners than the French, it was in our interest to bring about a *mêlée* in which our superiority would have full play, and this could only be done by steering in among them. Clerk had elaborated plans for concentrating a greater force on part of the enemy's line—by preference on the rear ships, which it was most difficult to support. Howe, whether by Clerk's inspiration or not, had acted in the way recommended by the Naval Tactics when he detached Pasley's squadron in the afternoon of the 28th. On the 1st June he made no attempt to concentrate a greater force on a part of the French. Perhaps he did not think it wise to ask too much at once from captains who were wedded to established

traditions. Perhaps he relied on the average better quality of his fleet to give him a sufficient superiority, even if it came into action only ship to ship. The great object was to secure a real battle, and not a mere artillery duel or idle parade. This he provided for by ordering his captains to steer through the intervals between the French ships and bring about a *mêlée*. It was in reality a decision displaying greater originality and calling for more boldness than were needed by Jervis or Nelson, who had his example to look back upon, and a long experience of the poor quality of their foes to encourage them.

All was not done as it should have been in the British fleet. Some captains were pedantic, and so nervously anxious to preserve their bearings to other English ships that they failed to tackle an enemy. We must not blame these men too much. They had been elaborately taught from boyhood to believe that the preservation of an orderly line was the first duty of a fleet in battle. To ask them to break away from ancient orthodoxy promptly and cheerfully was perhaps more than it was fair to demand from human nature. One captain, whose name may be now concealed, had to be brought to court-martial. He had served honourably before, and it may be that he lost his head amid confusing new conditions. In the main Howe's fleet supported its admiral gallantly, throwing itself upon the enemy from end to end. Only a minority of his captains found

a way to break through the French line; but they were enough to make this such a battle as had not been fought since the seventeenth century. Howe, as a matter of course, acted on his own rule to the full, steering to pass astern of the *Montagne*, the flagship of the *Villaret-Joyeuse*. The *Jacobin*, seeing the intention of the British admiral, shot ahead to close the line behind her admiral, but going too far, ranged up alongside the *Montagne*. The *Queen Charlotte*, Howe's ship, was forced in between them, and she came so close round the stern of the *Montagne*, raking the Frenchman from end to end with a crushing broadside as she came, that the tricolor caressed her port rigging. Into the gap created by the advance of the *Jacobin* steered Captain Harvey of the *Brunswick*. The *Vengeur* came up to close the line, and, according to former usage, should have succeeded in forcing the *Brunswick* to bear up, and engaged her side to side. But Captain Harvey was one of the officers who thoroughly shared the spirit of his admiral. If he could not find an opening he would make one. So he steered into the *Vengeur*, entangling his starboard anchors with the Frenchman's port chains. When asked whether he would not have the cable cut, he said, "No; now I have got her I will keep her." We need not repeat the well-known story of the sinking of the *Vengeur*. Captain Renaudin did his duty in an officer-like way, fighting his ship hard,

and clearing the upper deck of the Brunswick by the fire from his tops, while suffering heavily from the better managed broadside of the English ship. When the cable at length parted, Captain Harvey lay mortally wounded in his cabin, and 158 of the crew had fallen. The *Vengeur* staggered away, an already sinking wreck. As other ships gathered round him, Captain Renaudin surrendered, after a most gallant fight. It was an honourable piece of service, of which the French navy has every reason to be proud—as it has excellent reason to be ashamed of Barère's outrageous lie that she went down with her colours flying and her crew shouting "Vive la République!" The very worst side of the French character is shown by the persistence of this lying legend. It is taught to young sailors in manuals by men who know it to be false, but who think mendacity useful for the promotion of patriotic sentiment.

The two lines being locked in close battle, and being mingled together where our ships had steered through, a heavy pall of smoke settled down on the battle. So dense was it, that the crew of the *Barfleur* lost sight of their opponent, and believed they had sunk him. "Up jumped the Johnnies on the guns," as Collingwood has it in his letter home, to cheer triumphantly—partly to satisfy themselves, and partly to encourage their comrades fighting on the lower decks, where a tall man could not stand upright

below the beams, and the smoke banked so thick that it was barely possible to see from gun to gun, and the officers had to suck oranges in order that the sulphurous fumes should not choke their voices. There was much groping in the darkness in these old naval battles. In the midst of this obscurity there was good and bad on both sides. All his captains did not satisfy Howe. The best approximated to Harvey of the Brunswick, the less good to the unfortunate officer for whom the court-martial was waiting. Yet on the whole the French fleet was broken to pieces. First the *Montagne*, to escape the *Queen Charlotte's* guns, stood ahead, and as she took the wind out of the English ship's sails, she got away. A movement in advance was given to the French, and then all of them which did not find their retreat cut ran to leeward, leaving to us six prizes and the sinking *Vengeur*. Villaret-Joyeuse bore himself stoutly. Though his fleet was staggering from Howe's assault, he endeavoured to get it into order again, and even threatened to cut off some of the disabled British vessels which were drifting to leeward, for the damage in our line was severe. Yet had our attack been renewed, the six prizes might well have become twenty. That it was not was due to the exhaustion of Howe and the nervousness of his captain of the fleet (*i.e.*, chief of the staff), Sir Roger Curtis, an officer who had covered himself with glory at the Siege of Gibraltar. Like many another valiant fighter

when death only has to be faced, he was timid under responsibility. He feared that the French would turn the tables on us, and at his appeal Howe consented to call his fleet together and rest content with securing his six prizes and his crippled ships. For when the victory was achieved the reaction of five days' intense strain proved too much for the strength of a man of sixty-eight, who had lived the hard life of the seamen of those days. Howe would have fallen fainting on the deck if his signal-lieutenant, Codrington, had not caught him.

There is this amount of justification for the slighting phrase "a Lord Howe victory." Yet a mighty thing had been done. It is true that as our fleet went back to port to refit with its prizes, the French grain convoy reached port safely, escaping Montagu, passing over the scene of the battle, and seeing the wreckage it left. There was a work of scavengering to be done in Europe, and the French were not to be starved into submission yet. But there was a great work of protection against them to be done by us, and it was made possible by the victory of the 1st June. Howe's substantial merit is that he once and for all freed the British navy from the fetters of the Fighting Instructions. Rodney had begun in the battle of Dominica, but reluctantly, and only when he saw the enemy already disordered. Howe deliberately acted to produce the

disorder by his blows. To compare his victory with the Nile or Trafalgar is eminently unjust. Nelson had the example of the old admiral to guide him. It was Howe who first showed that an order of battle is a weapon to be used and not an end to be preserved. He first demonstrated clearly that a *mêlée* was not a misfortune but a step towards victory, and that by steering in among the French we gave free play to our strength. After this it was comparatively easy to carry his teaching still further — more especially when the foe was the ill-practised French squadron in its utterly false position at the Nile, or the clumsy mob of French and Spanish ships at Trafalgar. The fair comparison is with Rooke off Malaga, Pocock and Sir Edward Hughes on the coast of Coromandel, Keppel off Ushant, Byron at Grenada, Graves in the Chesapeake, Arbuthnot off the Capes of Virginia, and, best of them all, with Rodney in his barren encounters with Guichen to leeward and windward of Martinique, who were all of earlier date. When this test is applied, it will be seen at once that his predecessors were never more than good officers bound by routine, even when, as in the case of Pocock and Rodney, they strove to be original. He was a great captain, whose misfortune it was that his chance came late, when his bodily strength was no longer the trustworthy servant of his intelligence and his will.

THE CONQUEST OF CHARLOTTE.¹PART IV.—THE CONQUEST—*concluded.*CHAPTER XXV.—THE NORTH FORELAND—*continued.*

HE crossed to the window and stood up in it, looking out upon the street. The windows of the Trafalgar opposite were filled with farming folk; the porch below was throng with them, like the step of a beehive. A soft wind and sunshine caressed the town. He spread a hand towards it, as much as to say, "Look at it, look at it." I was looking, in a sudden gloom of discontent. What did they amount to, after all,—this big business, this increasing well-doing? The taste of my successes had become like ashes in my mouth.

"I'll tell you a bonny thing," he was saying, still looking out upon the street. "You remember, last hairst, the farmers Blebo way had to get the Irish across to cut for them. All the storms and rain-plouts that visited Fife seemed to land there, and the corn was that beaten down and matted that the reaping-machines couldn't take it. And—d'ye ken?—the auld hands for miles around that could win,—just ordinary folk like them down there,—went east to refresh dry hearts and eyes wi' a sight o' the huick in use again as it was in their young day. . . . Stood lining the field-sides and remarked on the pretty wark the Irishry were

making o't. Now, isn't that bonny?—as bonny and natural as a wild-rose, and scenting a whole country-side. . . .

"Ah, Dauvid!" he said, when I answered nothing. "Folk are perplexing—folk." He laughed. "You remember Tam—my laddie in Australia? Like me he has a bit gift o' music—fiddle and sang, and a fine crack—and was entertaining a company with them in a public, up country—Ballarat, or somewhere—Scots sang. . . . And 'mid the applause and standing o' drinks, up comes a fellow and shakes the hand off him nearly. A man in a fair way o' doing—a son, it turned out, of auld Peter Swab i' the Fish Wynd in St Brise. You'll not remember him? 'They tell me you are newly from St Brise,' said he. 'Ay,' Tam said, 'three months syne.' 'Man! you're a braw singer, lad! . . . but . . . gie's your hand. . . . Are the Bucket Pats still standing?' . . . There! Yet, would that man come back to the Fish Wynd?"

"Sentiment in drink!"

"There's much in that, I admit. But not everything."

"And pleasures of memory," I tossed off.

"Certainly! But what about the pains of experiences re-

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membered? My God! We've got to toil hard for the pleasures of memory!"

He spoke with an astonishing feeling. I suppose he was sincere; though so rotten was he that even in his sincerity he was insincere. "You have toiled . . ." I began. I would have added "for nothing, for worse than nothing"; but what was the use? But he followed my thoughts. "You only perceive," he said, "the rim o' the mune o' my misery."

He spoke with an infinite lament. If it was acting only, it was marvellous; undoubtedly it was only acting. He had come to this, that he played a character, and that the character he played was himself.

Some perception of this kept me silent, and drove back my mind upon myself.

"It's a vain world, this, David!"

Was he so cunning as to understand me? Deliberately or not, he had led my mood to feel for a note, and now he had struck it. "It is!" I cried, with earnestness.

He turned from the window in a laugh, and faced me with his news. "So Clephane is to have a young mistress at last," he said. My face betrayed the alarm he had surprised me into. "Somebody you ken well . . . well!" he went on, laughing at me. "Fie! You let all the young lads beat you!"

"You are the man for news," I said, trying to carry it off. "And who, say you, is the lady?"

"Do you think I ought to

tell you?" He hummed and hawed at insolent length before he did tell me. . . . "Brother Alick's daughter . . . Darling Downs, you know. . . . Just like that!"

"Edith Duncan!" I breathed relief that it was not Charlotte; yet, at the same moment, a jealousy for Edith stabbed me. "Nonsense!" I cried.

"Did you expect some other body? . . . But a man can only marry one lass, more's the pity," said he with a grin. And he added, "A merry lass, from what I saw of her. A find for Fife, as well as for the lucky man."

"That is it," I said. That *was* it. I was thinking of the rareness of the prize and the unworthiness of the winner,—and of myself without Charlotte. That was where the news galled me.

"Why!" I cried. I spoke as if it were impossible that any one should countenance so unfair a dispensation of fortune. "Why . . . her uncle . . . will he permit it? He knows about this Biatrucci affair!"

"Ho! ho!" cries Rab. "'Twas that that did it!" And then, as I looked at him incredulously, "You know it's settled? . . . But you don't know how it was settled? . . . I see you don't. . . . I'll tell you. I settled it!"

He chirruped a story of how he had insinuated himself into an acquaintance with the man Biatrucci, acquiring thereby a knowledge of him, which he turned against him later. He had played Figg to that end. A light broke for me on his

manceuvres with Figg. It spread its illumination over the withdrawal of Clephane confidences that had been irking me in these last months. "Now you understand how I'm so wonderfully in some folks' good books," he said, clinching my own thoughts.

"As for that Righton story," he went on. "Bah! I'll show you my hand. If there is anything in that story we shall never grip it. Rest assured of that. . . . Oh! I might bring it out as a last card should I ever be so far gaen as to be tempted to play it. One never knows. But"—he spoke eagerly—"I'm only auld in body, mind you! Not in the wits. Have you seen any slackening of the wits? No . . . and so long as I'm myself—man, cannot you understand?—I'm nearer Clephane, or Nochtly rather, when I have my hand on that story than if I were to redd it up!"

The whisky he had drunk must have gone to his head; else I should say now that he showed the first signs of slackened wits when he discovered himself so nakedly to me.

"I understand . . . the idea," I said; less to him than to myself, in an attempt to sound the extraordinary nature thus revealed to me.

"The idea, . . . a trifle," he took me up. "And to be sure you cannot put it down on parchment and sign and seal and witness and docket, and run up a bill of costs against it in your ledger. . . . Yet it governs. Just a ladybird on a

drab suit . . . yet it governs. . . . It governs the man Swab, though it may not bring him back to the Fish Wynd. . . . It governs you, Dauvid," he looked at me with a searching laugh, "though it's in the balance yet whether it will drive you away from *your* Fish Wynd. . . . We'll see; we'll see. . . . Though you are not exactly Rab Cuick, you have a bit leaven of the by-ordinary in you. Ho! ho! We'll see. For among the multiplicity o' ruling passions i' this world, the least flee-awa' o' them are apt to be the powerfulest in the long-run. . . . Look! You are surprised at my news. But Edith Duncan is only one of Brother Alick's many offspring, and the years pass fast wi' a woman, and Clephane's a desirable place, and it's time some folk settled down in it,—and so on, and so on. In all of which there's a plain, understandable, respectable idea, against which, even with Brother Gerald, the Exeter Hall view of the young man's *faux pas* must stand a poor chance.

"And so now," he said, making to go, "you've got my news. The young laird is to be married immediately to the Darling Downs lass—and away to the Antipodes to visit his new relations, before he comes home for a fresh start. A fresh start!" he cried, on the stairs, . . . and then, as we parted, "A selfish common-sense seems to be the prevailing wind, Mr Dauvid! . . . And, sirce, it seems to be the groweing wind as well."

The feel of that prevailing wind was in my bones as I left him and walked to my office; but "a fresh start!" was echoing in my ears. And there, like an answer to it, among my mid-day mail, lay a letter from Figg.

The thing seemed to breathe the man: truculent, depraved, exculpatory, inefficient above all. Reading it was like picking in a dust-heap. But it held a find for me which I scraped forth. Figg knew where Charlotte was. He was going to put a price on the knowledge of course; but I was ready to pay his price whatever it was. I had found Charlotte!

"A fresh start!" trumpeted irresistible now. All the afternoon I worked in my office clearing off urgent business. I had the most deliberate understanding of the step I was going to take and of the consequences it involved.

Charlotte should be mine, and together she and I were to seek life in some new world across the sea. That was my plan—call it my phantom. The business, Roselea, all the associations of the past, all the possibilities of the future here—all were to go. All were to be sacrificed: that was how it phrased itself in my mind by-and-by. I did not see the selfishness of the path I was choosing—that it was the last turn of selfishness; as I looked down it, it began to appear sublime. I did not see the selfishness; but I had an instinct against burning my boats. I must prove Figg's news. So I did not call on Mr Traill and tell my

purpose to him, but only left a note informing him that urgent personal business called me to London.

I travelled South overnight, and next forenoon sought out the Blackfriars lodging-house from which the letter was addressed. The building emitted an effluvia of cabbage and pease, which became sickeningly stifling as I mounted the stairs to Figg. I found him in a cubicle on the top floor, half dressed, sitting up in bed among soiled blankets, reading, with a cigarette between his lean, yellow-stained fingers. My arrival took him by surprise. He showed it by the wagging of his head and the whining insolence of his manner as he set up apologies for his conduct. My eyes followed the lean, indecent, tobacco-stained fingers, restlessly playing with the cigarette. Somehow they seemed typical of the man. In sudden angry loathing I broke through his defence, relentlessly pressing for his news and his price. He affected to find a grievance in that. I had to threaten him with some of Rab's revelations of the Biatrucci story before I could drag them out. After all, it was only a "fiver" he asked for. I drew a note from my pocket and held it up. "Now!" I demanded; and then he told me Charlotte was back with the O'Sullivans. The O'Sullivans, he explained, had come a cropper—"all U.P.—up a spout." They were living in Margate, and Charlotte was with them. He gave me the address. I slung the

note upon the bed, and left him.

It was late afternoon when I knocked at the door of the Margate house. A freckled, watery-eyed "slavey" opened it to me. She smirked over my inquiry. Miss Cook, she said, was out, shopping, but would be back . . . half an hour perhaps, perhaps less. I turned away without leaving my name. I would call again, I said; and going into the gardens off the Front took a seat that commanded the street, and watched for Charlotte's return. It was another wonderful day of spring—warm and balmy. The long shadows had crept past me on the grass when she appeared in the street. She had entered the house before I could intercept her; but the door was unclosed, and I pushed it open.

She was standing in the lobby, still in hat and gloves. The "slavey" had taken the parcels from her hand, and was delivering my message. I observed again, annoyed, the eager archness of her look. I pushed farther in beside them.

"I knew it was you," Charlotte said, levelly, silencing the girl's smirks, and bracing my fluttering eyes and tongue. She reflected a moment; then, "Shall we go out?" she said. I nodded assent, looking at her admiringly. She turned to leave a message with the maid about her return,—most matter of fact.

A thin cry of "Charlott-ee! Charlott-ee!" came from above. "Miss Moira calling you," the

girl said. Charlotte ran upstairs, beckoning me to wait. I heard a childish cry of pleasure; then Charlotte's voice in persuasive explanation. Presently some one joined them. "What ho—o!" came Mrs O'Sullivan's voice, followed by a long-drawn whistle. I was swept by annoyance again. Instinctively I knew that Mrs O'Sullivan was peeping down at me; and looking up the well of the staircase I saw a ball of yellow hair drawn back from over the baluster. The brilliance of the yellow was dead.

Charlotte's voice reached me again; protestingly now, half in annoyance, half in laughter. "Go 'long!" cried Mrs O'Sullivan. Then a loud kiss resounded through the lobby. I resented the kiss. "Kiss her for luck, Moira!"

Charlotte joined me presently, with hot averted face. "I am ready," she said, leading the way. We walked out of the unromantic house into the unromantic street. "Along the cliffs," she said, and turned into a road that led to them by the back of the town. And then, after a minute's silence, "I knew it was you."

"You expected me?"

She hung on the answer, reluctantly. "No."

"Honestly?"

"I am trying to be honest," she answered, with the ghost of scorn in her smile.

"Well, I am here," I acknowledged her meaning.

She asked me, hastily, "How did you know?" I thought she was asking how I knew her meaning. "Oh! I have learned,"

I began. But she corrected me, "How did you know I was here?"

"A little bird," I cried evasively. I dared not mention Figg. "Are you sorry?" She ignored the question, and told me of herself.

She told me so much only of her life in these ten months as explained her being with the O'Sullivan. But Mrs O'Sullivan filled in her outline for me with ardent colours next day.

The O'Sullivan had summersaulted back out of the ring of luck into the depression beyond. The tumble was a day's talk on 'Change. The house in Leinster Gardens had been broken up; and in the seclusion of Camberwell again they drew breath for a fresh upward flight. "As 'appy as 'appy," Mrs O'Sullivan said; "the Boss would come out on top, never fear!" Mrs O'Sullivan's philosophy was rooted in courage. But Moira pined and wasted. With the curious one-idea'd insistence of a sick child she fretted for Charlotte. "Find this Charlotte and there was chance of recovery," the doctor said. The O'Sullivan had already turned his back on Mabie's, and lunched his big person on a cup of cocoa at a cheap cookshop in order to take home jellies and grapes for Moira. To pay doctors' bills, Mrs O'Sullivan sent away her "slavey" and took in a boarder. Now, to compass advertisements in the agony columns of newspapers, which never caught Charlotte's eyes, they practised small economies on themselves and on the unfortunate lodger,—

dripping in place of butter, and like makeshifts. On all but the very dirtiest of days the O'Sullivan saved 'bus fares by taking Shanks' nag out to exercise. He had his reward. It was on one of his tramps homewards across the water that he ran against Charlotte. The good creatures spoke of that as his reward. Mrs O'Sullivan gave me no hint of the haven their household was to Charlotte at the lowest of her fortunes. As little did she seem to think of a Deity, or even of a vaguer Providence, to be thanked because their own fortunes lifted from the day Charlotte joined them. Her pagan eye was all for the wonder of things as they fell out. Strength was creeping back into Moira's delicate frame; flesh on her arms, even colour to her cheeks, since they came down to Margate here. And Charlotte, the dear good girl, was the talisman. All this, and the sisterly affection between the two women in consequence, was in that kiss of Mrs O'Sullivan's—the kiss that grated on me still, by the vulgarity of it. I said something to Charlotte now that glanced at the vulgarity.

"A brave affectionate woman," she challenged, hotly.

Abashed, I blurted, "You have learnt much in these months."

"A world," she answered.

I looked at her in sudden wonder. The moment I had met her in the lobby I had been conscious of some change in her. Now I had some dim perception of the roots of it. It was not in the material

battle of life in these months in London that they were struck, but in the fight of her nature to recovery from her disillusionment. Yet in that experience she had not exchanged all the daft virtue in her blood for that of its wisdom. The old natural spring of life leapt in her. Romance was the star of her nature, and it shone bright in her still.

We had left the street now, and crossing some waste ground came out upon the cliffs. The sun was on the horizon behind us. In front, the headlands rose out of the sea, massive butts of white ivory tipped with gold. I gave an exclamation of pleasure at the sight. It awoke her. She talked of that coast. The purpose I was there with was raging, inexpressible, in my blood; but she assuaged it for the moment by her talk. On such a night, twenty years before, we had walked together by the sea at St Brise. The sense of all that had happened in these twenty years was like an atmosphere enveloping that recollection. There was satisfaction, restfulness, a momentary repletion, in this parallelism of experience—that wonderful decorative principle of life. . . . She knew all the landmarks on the shore here, and told me what I might expect if I were to continue walking round it: the Goodwins, and Beachy Head. Beachy Head! She had stories of sea-fights in the Channel. She spoke of the lights of France flashing across it on black nights. Beyond the point we were rounding was the North

Foreland: when darkness fell, on the way home inland, we should see its light. "You know it all well," I said.

"My favourite walk," she told me. "Round here, and back by the land road. . . . You will laugh when I tell you . . . just a child . . . I like to watch for the first flash from the lighthouse . . . to go round here at sunset, and on the road back, watching for it, feel the surprise of the first flash. . . . You'll laugh! I might be Moira!" She was right. There was a child seated at the heart of her nature.

I had stopped in my walk to look about me. As we fell into step again, "This is all new to me," I remarked.

"So it was to me in a way," she said, after a little,—*"in a way. Yet do you know"*—her mind was running loose and frank with me, reminding me more than ever of that night in St Brise. "Do you know, I used to dream of this . . . I think. Not exactly this . . . when we were little, and heard tell of things"—I could imagine Aunt Charlotte telling them, and Rab—"and read of them—of sailors and far-away lands and the fighting days: not of any one in particular, but altogether, you know—just the greatness of our country, you know: just the vague, sweet figure of our country—this was the shape it took . . . something like this . . . the leafy fields of England . . . leafy lanes and fields, somewhere in the West . . . and this South coast here, and the Channel . . ."

This was a new Charlotte to

me—as new as this coast. And because she seemed of a sudden far removed from me again, the thought of another coast assailed me with a fierce pain.

“You haven’t forgot St Brise, Charlotte?”

“Forgot!”

“Oh, I know you have not. Is it likely you would forget, when I never cease to remember?”

She looked at me—I thought, doubtfully.

“Why am I here if I forget?” I demanded of her.

“Why should I wish to be there, seeing I remember?” she answered my reproach.

The selfish purpose in me leapt to the opening she gave me here. I caught her arm and stopped her. “Do you think I wish you there?” I cried. “Do you think I wish to go back myself? . . . Oh! it’s good enough for a memory,” I said, echoing Rab’s conversation.

“Come away with me—let us get away, across the sea. . . . Think of it? You and I, clear of it all—away from it, from them, all—in a new country where . . . where . . .” I huddled about in my speech, seeking some harbourage which a new country might hold for us, to point it out to Charlotte; but always I was thrown back into the rough waters of my own present,—“where we can be away from them all. Why should we yoke ourselves to other folk’s stories?—dead and gone folk, dead and gone stories.” I seemed to see, suddenly revealed in my words, the years we had lost. “Come away with me now—now!”

She answered my vehemence, her lip trembling in a laugh. “Now? . . . Could we take wings and fly . . .” she spread a comical hand towards the dying splendours of the day, “. . . to the West. Aye to the West.”

“You laugh at me.”

“I do not.” She repeated earnestly, “No; I do not.” And then, “Would you leave it all—all?”

“With you.”

“For me?”

It was an appeal; a daring appeal of her love for the removal of that doubt which had always been the barrier against it. It flashed me a glimpse of the barrier, and struck me silent for a second; and in that second I knew she was falling away from me again. “Can you not believe that I love you?” I cried, as if to keep her.

But she did not answer. “It would only be running away—running farther away,” she said, instead. “What has any one ever made by running away——?”

I interrupted her. “Others had found happiness,” I said. I mentioned her brother Dave.

She hesitated a moment before she answered me,—“I wrote to Dave—a daft letter. Oh!” she laughed, “I’ve had my time, too, when the West called me. . . . He asked me to come out to them. He wanted to send the passage-money to take me out. But I could read between the lines.—Mind you,” she interrupted herself, “Dave’s the finest man that ever stepped. He would

understand that letter,—he would understand it.—But I didn't go to him. . . . There and here. In the young country and in the old. . . . Haven't I tried it? Haven't I seen below the surface here? Is it different from below the surface in Fife? . . . How's my father?" she asked suddenly.

"I saw him yesterday."

"Was he . . . how was he?"

"He was full of news," I answered, and told her his news. She said nothing. There was no change in her face, or I could not see it in the deepening twilight; only her step beat quicker on the road. "You do not think . . ." I began, with a kind of laugh. The consciousness of that jealous pang when I heard Rab's news made me uneasy, and it was with a defensive instinct that I anticipated a suspicion that might lurk in her mind. "You do not think I am jealous of Richard?" I said therefore. And in a rush of recollection and feeling I added, "I *was* jealous of him, but not now, for this. O Charlotte! I have loved you always."

The sincerity of passion in my cry surprised her. It seemed to find an answering note in her own sincerity. She stopped in her walk and faced me. I saw only the pain in her face. "I did not mean to hurt you," I besought. She answered, "No, no," impatiently. "But *you* know why I ran away from Fife—*you* know?" she cried.

The appeal of pride was in

her words now. She wished to say to me, "It was on my father's account I ran away. He is your stumbling-block too—ought not I to understand? I do understand. Only for my pride's sake say it." That was all in her words. But I was thinking fiercely of the reason country-side scandal gave for her going; and "From your father," I answered, defiantly eager for my own pride's sake to repudiate the scandal.

She guessed what was behind my answer: she remembered Figg's hints. Her face went white. She put a hand upon me. "Do they believe that at home?" she said in a whisper almost.

It was a revelation.

"Oh!" I cried, in a gasp of wonder and triumph at the revelation; "then you mind what they think at home."

I saw her face shrink from me. I saw her shrink against the wall. I heard her sobs. I put my arms about her. I had not meant to be cruel. I was not thinking of the cruelty of my words now. They and the moment of their utterance melted into events and years of a past suddenly revealed to me. Her tears and pain mattered nothing; what they told me was the only thing that mattered.

"You love me, Charlotte?"

She protested, "I did not say so," in her tears.

"But my love hears your love calling."

I held her in my arms in the darkness. The night was stone dead; its only sound was the thick breathing of cattle

in a field near by. I held her close. I would not be denied. I was myself. I saw myself; and in that revelation was myself. At last I had reached the heights of a higher self, and from them could look down on the valleys of selfishness where I had lingered so long. Aunt Sarah, the family of Trail, this fat business in Fife; Rab Cuick, and the finger of country-side laughter pointed at me. I saw them all now, and how they had bound me all the while that my heart was turned to Charlotte. I have told you, that is my story. I saw how I had yielded to the temptation which the Righton story held. I saw the pitiful last subterfuge of self in this plan for carrying Charlotte across the seas. And seeing all this, I knew she was mine. She was mine. In finding myself, I had found that which alone could win her. With the revelation of my unmanliness came an indisputable assurance. I held her close. "Charlotte, we will not run away. You will come home with me," I told her. I felt the answering leap of her heart.

Suddenly we were enveloped in a great light. The lighthouse flash, swinging round through a break in the wood between, fell full on us. It flooded the road and the trees above, and through the ghastly glimmer of the wall picked out the thick ivy stems dusted with grey chalk. It enveloped us—like a physical accompaniment of the light that had broken within ourselves. We fell a little apart in it. In that half-minute our eyes spoke.

"I have been selfish."

"I have asked too much."

"Can you understand—how selfish?"

"I know—how much too much."

"I have been long of understanding."

"You will never understand a woman's pride." (This with a smile.) "Or her need to be loved."

"I love you."

"And to be sure of it?"

"You will come home."

As suddenly as it had fallen the light was blotted out. I held out my arms in the dark. She came to them. She was mine.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE LAST.

My story—our story—ended that night at the North Foreland when Charlotte and I found each other and the greatest thing in the world. But sometimes Life ministers to the curious sense in us by rounding off its stories; and it rounded ours off wonderfully.

I have told of days we spent

in London, like happy London lovers, immediately after our marriage, when we revisited the scenes of Charlotte's adventures. And, of course, in them we went over our whole story; beginning with Hector MacNab and Christian Tullis, and the Legend of the Sabbath Night, and Mirrin MacNab's

sinister figure; piercing bit by bit our several gleaming contributions to it. The result was no more complete than I have given it in these foregoing pages; some obscure passages in it were not restored till later, there are some which never can be restored; but in that happy time its pattern grew under our eyes with a wonderful clearness. Perhaps Love's eyes were the best for its understanding.

Charlotte spoke much of her mother, tenderly but without reserve. She went over the events of that night when Aunt Charlotte sailed for the Happy Islands. It was then I learned how Dave's masculine sense had lifted her out of the mists of small moralities to an understanding of the dignity of her mother's love for Rab. From that moment, I could see, a respect that was enormous enveloped her affection for Dave.

But it was of her grandmother, Christian Tullis, that we talked most. She touched Charlotte's imagination. Charlotte did not speak of her with any sentimental regard: these last months in London must have sifted out of her nature any dregs of illusory sentiment that were in it. Yet it was more than an imaginative interest she felt. All through these months Christian Tullis's story, so much as she knew of it, had run in her thoughts. It did much to preserve in her a mind erect among all her disillusionments. And now when, filling out that story from my completer knowledge, I told her

of Rab's hint that the Widow Dunlop might be living still, with a bright impulse she declared we must go to Holland. I acquiesced. The curious and literal instinct was not dead in me. "That," I cried, "will probe the story to the bottom—if you discover yourself to her."—"No, no," she said. "We must respect her wishes. Besides, she would deny me," she added, showing how deep she had penetrated to her grandmother's heart. . . . It was an imaginative impulse: that was all; just a wish to know if she lived, and if so to catch one glimpse of her perhaps.—We were only to be in time to see Christian Tullis put into her grave.

In Amsterdam, with our scraps of knowledge to guide us, we discovered the house in the Heerengracht. We found that it was a home for orphaned children, for orphaned girls, established by the Widow Dunlop; and that she lived all the year round now at Berkhoorn, her country seat in Gelderland. Early the next afternoon we alighted from a steam-tram at Berkhoorn pump. We lunched at an inn beside it, in a cool verandah, shaded by the vivid greenery of the spring elms. The hostess, a grave woman, knew enough of English to interpret our wants; and afterwards she called down her son to converse with us. Koos was a lad with a bright frank face, blue-eyed, round-nostrilled, of a figure of unusual height and slimness, clad all in black. He spoke English well—with evident pride in speaking it.

Here was a spring, I thought to myself, that might be tapped for the information we wished; but it bubbled up of its own accord. . . . A pupil-teacher, taking up languages, he explained. He told us he had improved his English by reading aloud to the lady of Berkhoorn. She that was dead. A compatriot?—for we were English surely?—So was she, but you wouldn't have known it. Her Hollands was a native's. A wonderful woman! He repeated "A wonderful woman." And now she was dead—four days ago. This was her funeral day. The hearse—all the way from Arnhem—had gone on to 't Huis Berkhoorn. The Burgomaster and the Notary had walked out earlier. It would be here any minute now. He was waiting to follow it. The villagers in groups there—they would all follow to the graveyard. . . . Oh yes, the women and children as well as the men, in workaday clothes, just as they were. They would miss the Weduwe Dunlop, he said: we had not required him to mention the name to tell us who was the lady of Berkhoorn. Already we had fixed the picture of her he drew in his boyish enthusiastic talk. "Blind, stone-blind . . . for years. But brave! Hey, brave! What a spirit for a woman over eighty! Each morning to the last she was carried down to the *voorkamer*. She knew all that was going on round her. Better than those with all their eyesight. She knew about everything—everything

that was going on in the world she was interested in. He went up to the house and read to her—the newspapers, Dutch, English, French too. A wonderful woman. . . ."

So he was still running on, when the *cortège* entered the village. We stood up under the elms as it passed—Koos like a high pole beside us. Then he left to follow it. We waited a minute before we went also. "She cannot object to this," Charlotte said. And so, at a distance, as strangers, we followed Christian Tullis to her grave.

Beyond the village were fir-woods; and beyond them moorland, where we spent the afternoon. We felt we wanted to be in the open. It had all flashed upon us so wonderfully! Later, we returned to the village, coming round by 't Huis Berkhoorn. With its spread jalousies it looked cool and debonair at the end of the larch avenue; with formal beds of tulip and lily, and a fountain splashing in a round pond in the sunlight. Afterwards we walked out to the graveyard. Adjoining it was the *Pastorie*, and beside it the *Pastorie* garden. We saw the Dominee out in it among his flowers. The new grave lay near a clump of weeping birches. Here—was our unspoken thought beside it—here was the end of a story stretching back to the night of the Legend. The beginning and the end of a story. We seemed to know her better, standing here,—this woman who had influenced so many lives we were acquainted

with, not least of all our own. A woman—so we pieced her history from the broken fragments in our possession—a woman who, having consented to run away from her past, resolutely never looked back. From her bosom Charlotte pulled a paper, one of those she had found in her mother's patch-box, the letter written long ago to Janet Seton. "God will blot out the past and open a future to broken hearts," it ran. "A wonderful, brave woman," Koos had said.

As we turned away the Dominee was on the path. He was an old man, garrulous; like the philosopher's, his interest lay in the garden; and he was something of a philosopher also. So he discovered himself. He had seen us in the village earlier, he said: his pastoral courtesy required no excuse. He seemed a little excited; or eager.—"An Englishwoman, did we know?" he asked, pointing to the grave.—"We said we knew: a lad at the inn had told us about her.—"Ah! Koos Flink?"—"Tall, very tall."—"Yes, yes, Long Koos they called him. Also, sometimes they called him the Walking-Stick of our Lord." He smiled apologetically. I turned to the grave again to tell him how Koos had said "A wonderful woman." "Surely, and proud—but . . ." He left his sentence incomplete to invite us to his house—to see his flowers. We went with him and saw them, and he offered us refreshment. He and I would have Hollands. "For Mevrouw," he said

"Mevrouw" questioningly, "my wife?"—and smiled benignly when I answered Yes. "For Mevrouw he recommended an *advokaat*." He called his old housekeeper, Doortje; and Doortje, with the rosy cracked face framed by the gopher of her *kornet*, brought her a glass of sweetened egg and brandy. "You wouldn't be offered an *advokaat* in every Dominee's house in Holland," he told us. I gathered that perhaps he had some troublesome temperance censors in his parish. But he said next that he was glad he lived in a village where people were earnest, not critical. . . .

So he talked on, revealing himself; and he discovered a portrait of the Widow Dunlop also. He spoke of her charity and her wealth. "Wealth—oh!" He raised his eyebrows, and sifted imaginary pieces between finger and thumb. The will would have been read by this time. He thought the Notary would have been back by this time on his way home from the reading. He spoke irritably. He couldn't understand why the Notary wasn't back,—unless it was that the Burgomaster was with him. Set *him* down to his glass and he wouldn't rise. . . . But he would hear the will in good time . . . in good time . . . when the Notary returned. Though the widow's fortune couldn't be anything to what her husband left . . . seven *ton* if it was a *stuiver*, *he* must have left. The son lost a lot of it—lifting a ship off a sandbank, at Tessel. The son was drowned—no, not at the ship-lifting,

but somewhere, away sailing. . . . A wild lad. Yes, it was a terrible blow to his mother: she was devoted to him. But the widow never showed much. "A brave, proud woman—but." Dirk Dunlop, her husband, adored her. That, the Dominee said, was as it should be; and he looked to Charlotte. The Dominee was a delightful, courteous gentleman. "Still," he continued, "I always thought there was a tragedy somewhere. . . . I always say a wife will tell her husband everything in her life, sooner or later. . . . Always tell your husband everything, madam,"—he made a polite laughing little bow to Charlotte. . . . "But I'm not sure of the widow," he added, as if to himself.

He talked us to his gate, and sped us into the road to the village. Almost his last words were, "She must have left a good deal of money." We bade him farewell then. We saw him again for a moment from the steam-tram, as it carried us away from Berkhoorn. He was still in his garden, looking down the road. He was waiting for the Notary with his news.

Three nights later we arrived in Town of Tarvit. My first duty was to call on Mr Trail, and I set out to do it with a heart resolutely braced for the encounter. His greeting was, "Why do you come alone? Where's your wife? Bring her and present me to her, if she will come to see me." Michael Trail was a sagacious man. His talking thus, as if there

were nothing remarkable in my bringing home Charlotte as my wife, or even in the manner of my doing it, threatened my heroic with collapse; but he soon restored it by a vision of my ordeal. "By the way, Rab's about the town," he said. A twist of his lip, as he carried the snuff to his nose, was the only sign he permitted himself of recognising a situation at once humorous and full of possible chagrin. Rab's own saying, "Damned awkward thing an ill-reputed father-in-law!" stabbed me afresh.—Well, Rab was still the ordeal.

I took Charlotte to call upon Michael the next night, after early dinner. He still dined early. He was marvellously agreeable and polite to her; and she liked him from that night, though he never encouraged intimacy between the households. The talk was all commonplace; to all appearance the visit was the most level in the world. I knew he was ill at ease and wished it over; but he did not show it, save in one little thing. He had coffee for us; he himself did not drink coffee. And when he asked her if she would have sugar with her coffee, he pronounced it "shuggar." I knew from that that he was not himself.

The interview was a strain upon us as well; and when we left, the lown young-summer night tempted us to a walk. We turned into the road to Nochtly. A mile or more out a wide wood skirts it, through which a path runs back to Town of Tarvit. In its solemn

depths Charlotte took my hand. A field or two away was a pit-head, the farthest west of the new workings started on Clephane. Between the labouring breaths of its pump through the still night came a clear melody: some tuneful ploughman, I thought, whistling, as his ancestors whistled, to keep off evil spirits in the dark. And by-and-by, when the path turned eastwards, we saw Town of Tarvit lights. It was a moving night. "Do you know," Charlotte said suddenly, "what I once saw on a gravestone in Kensington—an epitaph on a woman? This, 'A beauty and a virtue'!" I took her in my arms and kissed her.

And then, at the very next bend, we encountered Rab. He was standing under some trees on a bank by the path-side, and we were upon him before we observed him. Charlotte gripped my hand. The contest of feeling in her shook her. I was shaken myself, though I answered her clasp with some assurance. I had determined how I should treat him when we met: firmly but persuasively. I had some projects in my head for his social reinstatement,—a cottage, a bit of garden. The feeling in both of us, I think, was that we must be kind to him, poor man,—poor misguided man! I suppose he detected, or at least guessed, the patronage in it; and resented it. At any rate, he took the wind out of our sails laughably.

He held out his hand to us, but allowed us to approach him to shake it; and so keeping his

place on the bank, he had the advantage of position. He looked old and rather done; but there was nothing in his appearance that seemed to call for the material help we planned for him. He never needed material help; and we had no other to offer him. In his left hand was a short wand of hazel—a whistle of his own making. He was the tuneful player. For a second or two he looked down on us with a grave paternal look. "So you're home," he said, "—at last." And then, at once, "You are not grateful. I exist in your minds," he explained—"I exist in your minds as the obstacle. You do not understand that it was I who brought you together." With a word he flashed us back to that night at the back of St Brise pier. "I promised your Aunt Sarah then," he said, "to extract some high latent qualities from your nature. Here this night is my reward!"

He went on. "You've been honeymooning in Holland, I hear;" and then, with a sudden turn, "About Nocht?" he said. He jerked a hand towards the Den. "David will have told you, Charlotte," he began; and in his crooked illusive way he lighted up the story of Christian Tullis. Charlotte put out a protesting hand. "True," he said, eagerly; "'Dead men don't bite,' as conspirator lads used to say." His teeth clicked as Charlotte gave a startled look to me. "Nor dead women," he added, as if closing a book. Whether it was only a guess, confirmed by Charlotte's

gesture, or whether he had some surer knowledge, I do not know. It may be said for him that he never made public use of Christian Tullis's story. It may be said against him that she suffered half a lifetime from the threat his knowledge held over her. I am certain a vital part of life slipped from him when he learned that she was dead.

And then he commenced a kind of exordium,—insolent beyond belief. I do not know why we suffered it. It was not only our resolution to endure him that kept us standing there, and silent. There was something fascinating in him. "Ho! ho! To think of all the young blades ranging the world for the woman. And when they have wooed and married and a'—! At any rate, you've made a braw if belated start. But don't," he said, "don't be overly uplifted in the story of your love-making." Another thing he said to me I remember was, "Keep bright and polished the harness of your mind. Scour it wi' elbow-grease. So, lad—that's to live!" And then he turned to Charlotte. "Feed him, Charlotte, feed him!" he said. . . . "I'll tell you a story. When

Dick Turbayne married Agg Hutch'on they took up house on the same landing wi' me at the East Port. And the first morning, when he came home at the breakfast-hour, she had pease-brose for him, and she gave him pease-brose for his dinner, and the same again when he loused at night. And when he found pease-brose set down to him again the next morning, 'Help me! Agg!' says he, 'do you think I'm a mavis?' . . . So, see you feed him well." He laughed. I was laughing in anger myself. I felt Charlotte on my arm laugh on the brink of crying. "Take me away," she whispered; and I took her away; and farther down the path she had her cry out. Then, all composed, like the fair daybreak after a night of rain, "Home," she said; and looked with a new look of love into my eyes. "Home!" I was filled with the wonder of my good fortune. "What have I done—to deserve it?" my heart said; and her look said, "You loved me."

Sounding fainter and fainter down the woodside as we walked home to Tarvit came a wedding-march played on Rab's ironic pipe.

THE SHIPPING COMBINE FROM A NAVAL POINT OF VIEW.

It is not altogether easy to explain the *rationale* of the various popular movements or "scares" that periodically seize the British public, or at any rate that large and increasing section of them who are interested in the progress and development of our sea-power. Not infrequently long periods have elapsed during which the man in the street has appeared to forget that it is upon sea-power and its handmaid maritime commerce that under God the safety and welfare of our empire does mainly depend. They may be years of push and progress, or of reaction and stagnation; but the public generally remains in undisturbed and blissful ignorance of all that is being done or left undone.

Then comes a sudden awakening; there is much anxiety, excitement, and agitation. Pressure is put upon the Administration to do something, and that speedily. There is much writing in periodicals and newspapers. Every one who has a hobby trots it out. The optimist and the pessimist sound their trumpets or scream wildly, and then, after an interval, all settles down again, and the Government, the administrators, the business men, and all others concerned are once more left in peace to carry on their work undisturbed.

I do not for one moment mean to imply that these scares have been baseless. In many

instances the Navy has profited greatly by the interest aroused and by the publication of hitherto little known facts, which is the invariable concomitant of our periodical scares. But at the same time there is much rubbish and chaff mixed up with the really valuable matter with which at such times we are inundated, and it requires great care to discover the really pertinent facts, and to decide thereupon what is the right course or policy to be adopted.

Most of the literature which has appeared as a concomitant of the "Combine" scare has paid little attention to the Naval point of view, often for the good and sufficient reason that the writers are not particularly well versed in Naval matters, or again because it has appeared to be mainly a question of commerce and political economy. But in many instances the risk and menace to our sea-power has been enlarged upon in high-sounding language, in which a mighty and terrible spectre has been depicted as brooding over our mercantile marine and Navy alike, so that the reader or hearer goes away with the idea that the responsible authorities must either be in a state of great apprehension and alarm, or must be extremely callous and indifferent to the welfare of their country.

I do not wish it to be supposed that I am speaking with

any special authority or with any access to facts that are not generally known; nor as a Naval officer do I profess to speak as a direct representative of the opinions of others. But there is a Naval way of looking at things as apart from that of people not in the service, and it is this view which I wish to place before the readers of 'Maga.'

Let us for a few minutes calmly review the facts that have been instrumental in promoting the agitation that has taken place. Within the last twelve months a syndicate of American capitalists, whose moving spirit is Mr Pierpoint Morgan, have acquired all the shares of the following British steamship companies:—

The White Star Line.

The Dominion Line.

The Leyland Line.

The Atlantic Transport Co.

The American Line.

The total number of steamers, the control of which has been thus acquired, is 118, with a gross tonnage of some 800,000 tons. They are generally vessels of a high class, being of modern build, of large dimensions, and good speed. They comprise about one-fourth of the tonnage trading from the United States to Great Britain and Northern Europe, the remaining three-fourths being mainly British, German, and all other nations taken together, in about equal proportions. But the independent British ships—i.e., those not in the Combine—are in the hands of various owners; whilst the German ships belong to the two gigantic companies, the

Norddeutscher-Lloyd and the Hamburg-American Line. The French have only about 5 per cent of the total trade from Northern Europe to America; the Americans themselves not much more. Various statements have appeared as to the proportion which the tonnage of the vessels controlled by the Morgan syndicate bears to the total tonnage of the mercantile marine of the British and German Empires respectively. But these figures must be accepted with much caution. The tonnage of a ship only gives a very rough idea of her carrying power. Indeed, one great object in building a ship is to make the carrying power high and the tonnage low. Ships are taxed in proportion to their register tonnage; but their earning capacity is mainly based on their carrying power. Modern ships carry much more for their tonnage than older ones.

Then, again, speed makes a great difference in carrying power. Obviously a fast ship which makes twelve Transatlantic voyages in the year will carry twice as much cargo as a slower ship with the same cargo space making only six voyages. But the fast ship, with her enormous engines and large coal-supply, will be much larger and more expensive. Taking into consideration the build and speed of the ships over which the syndicate has obtained control, it may be roughly estimated that they have in their Combine from one-eighth to one-tenth the carrying power of the total

tonnage on the British Register, more than half that of the German Mercantile Marine, and quite as much as the whole carrying power of the Commercial Marine of France. In this connection it may not be amiss to remark that, until the formation of the Morgan Combine, Germany stood pre-eminent as the home of gigantic shipping companies. The two great companies above mentioned own pretty nearly two-thirds of Germany's tonnage; and every single ship flying the German flag which is notable for speed, size, or carrying power belongs to one or other of the two companies. Had Mr Morgan managed to obtain control over these two corporations, he might well have boasted that he had swept into his combination all that was worth having in the second merchant navy of the world. The immense pride and interest taken by all prominent Germans, from the Emperor downwards, in the development of a mercantile marine — which is above all other things to be exclusively German — must have made this contingency impossible from the very first, and in all probability Mr Morgan never seriously contemplated any such possibility.

With regard to the type of ship in the Combine, it is as well to note that the steamers over which the American syndicate have obtained control were mainly built for the trade between North America and Northern Europe, and as such possess certain characteristics

which, though not altogether unfitting them for use elsewhere, would greatly reduce, if it did not completely extinguish, their dividend-earning power on other lines of route.

There are many special conditions attaching to the trade across the North Atlantic which make the service a special one, and entail the employment of a class of vessel not to be found elsewhere.

First and foremost comes the fact that the stream of passengers making its way across the Atlantic is enormously greater than that of any similar stream in any other part of the world. So much so, that a vessel building for the Atlantic trade would commonly make provision for carrying four times the number of passengers that she would expect to carry on any other line of route. And of all shipping business, the passenger trade, when successful, is by far the most remunerative. But it is at the same time far the most expensive, and the capital sunk being so large, the risk is correspondingly great. A passenger-steamer carries but little cargo: most of the cargo space being devoted to steerage passengers, engines, and coal, her cargo capacity is necessarily limited. A slow cargo-steamer could carry the same weight of goods with not more than one-tenth of her daily expenses.

In the carriage of passengers the German lines have one considerable geographical advantage. The main stream of emigration to America no longer

flows from Great Britain, but from the Continent, and it is from the ports of Hamburg and Bremen that most of the emigrants take their departure. The German lines, sure of a monopoly in this trade, can with less risk invest in vessels of enormous speed and correspondingly high running expenses, with which they hope to tempt American travellers to desert the British lines and to take passage to Southampton under the German flag. And so far they appear to have been very successful. Notwithstanding the costliness of the 23-knot German steamers, they seem to be giving their owners satisfaction.

Yes; but what of the subsidies granted by the German Government? I hear some one say. Now the Germans deny that their American trade receives any subsidy. The fact is, that payment for carrying mails is styled a subsidy, as is also payment for every mile steamed, which some nations, notably the French, grant to their ships.¹ After passenger-carrying, mail-carrying is the most paying business, and it is a monopoly assigned by the Government to the line taking the mail contract. But the so-called subsidy for carrying mails, though on some routes a very substantial over-payment, may on other routes cost the taxpayer but little. The letter-writer pays the Post Office for

the conveyance of his letter, so that when the Germans state that their American lines receive no subsidy they mean that, owing to the bulk of the mails carried, the mail subsidy is simply a *quid pro quo*, and not, therefore, in the current sense of the word, a subsidy at all.

Besides the high-speed mail and passenger ships, the Atlantic trade is remarkable for the enormous cargo-steamers which have been placed in the water within the last fifteen years. When the Great Eastern was built, some fifty years ago, she proved a complete failure financially. She was too large for the docks; there were no facilities for collecting, loading, or unloading her cargo in a reasonable time. Special machinery was needed for dealing with the great mass of goods which she was constructed to carry; and this machinery did not exist. Modern development has provided the ports on both sides of the North Atlantic with the necessary facilities for loading or unloading many "Great Easterns" simultaneously. Hence an up-to-date Atlantic fleet contains numbers of ships capable of carrying 12,000 tons of cargo or more, which can be loaded or unloaded in less time than a ship of one quarter the size of twenty years ago.

But such ships as the big Atlantic passenger-steamers would not pay anywhere else.

¹ A French sailing-vessel has been known to make a long voyage empty, earning a subsidy for every mile sailed. This paid her much better than waiting for a cargo.

In fact, the owner of such ships is practically bound to run them to the United States and back, or not at all.

The Morgan Combine has on its list three very fast passenger steamers:—

The Oceanic, 21 knots.

The Majestic, 20 "

The Teutonic, 20 "

Also the following ships of high but not remarkable speed:—

Celtic, 17 knots.

Germanic, 17 "

And some thirty large cargo-steamers running from 12 to 16 knots—which carry passengers at lower rates.

The remaining vessels are not remarkable in any way, and could be readily duplicated, at very short notice, from the reserve ships of other large British lines or from the ranks of the better class tramp-steamers, by which is meant those vessels which are not confined to any particular line of route, but roam the world over for such employment as may be found remunerative.

How far the formation of the Combine is likely to lead to a war of freights in the Atlantic trade, with the view of driving away competitors, and finally obtaining more or less of a monopoly with increased freights, it is hard to say; at any rate it is not so much a Naval as a commercial matter. It must be evident that one combination will naturally tend to produce others, and that it would therefore be an ordinary method of commercial self-defence for the various companies and private owners not in the Morgan Combine to form an Associa-

tion of their own. This must perforce be an all-British concern, for, putting on one side the few French, Dutch, and Belgian steamers, there are no others. The Atlantic trade would then be in the hands of

(a) The Morgan Combine.

(b) The two German Companies (Norddeutscher Lloyd and Hamburg-American).

(c) The new Association.

The ships marshalled under (c) would most certainly claim to carry all the British mails in preference to those in the Morgan Combine; and if this was conceded, the latter might then turn to the United States Congress for assistance, the final tendency being to send the Morgan ships under the American flag, whilst the three nationalities would all be clamouring to their respective Governments—British, American, and German—to assist them with subsidies to elbow their rivals off the ocean. If a rival association should be formed, careful statesmanship will be necessary, lest there be too much interference with private trading.

Having dealt with the class of ship over which control has been acquired and the trade in which these ships are and must remain engaged, it is now desirable to go more closely into the question as to the power and position of the syndicate, and the international standing of the vessels controlled by them.

A merchant-vessel engaged in carrying cargo or passengers across the high seas is in a very different position from

a waggon or other vehicle carrying goods on shore. Not only is a commercial transaction involved which entails the existence of an owner or his agent, who directs the movements of the conveyance; but the ship necessarily carries to sea with her an obligation to conform to law, such as is universal with all members of civilised nations. To what laws should she conform? The laws of the country whose flag she is entitled to fly. And how can she obtain the necessary authorisation to fly that flag? She must have complied with certain conditions enjoined by the executive of the country whose flag she desires to fly. And these conditions vary greatly in different countries, in some cases being very stringent and in others extremely elastic. Moreover, there is nothing fixed or unchangeable about such regulations. For example, the conditions under which the American flag may be hoisted are at present decidedly stringent. But an Act of Congress might so relax them that a large number of ships which, under the present state of affairs, cannot possibly be considered American might all be gathered into Uncle Jonathan's fold and hoist the American flag, without changing managing owners, captains, or crew.

It is only within the last half-century that such wide divergencies have existed between the laws of different countries as to the conditions to be fulfilled before the national flag may be hoisted. Before

that date the British Navigation Acts were fairly typical of all corresponding legislation in other countries. The object of these Acts was to impose certain restrictions on all vessels desirous of hoisting the British flag, and in return to grant them the monopoly of all trade which could be kept in their hands by British law. The principal restrictions imposed were—

All officers and men to be British.

An adequate number of apprentices to be carried.

The ship to be built in England.

The ship to be owned by a British subject.

And the principal advantage conceded—

Exclusive right to all trade between one British port and another, including all British colonies.

It was also enacted that no foreign ship might bring into a British port cargo shipped at the port of some third nation. A French ship might bring a cargo from Marseilles, but not from Cadiz or Lisbon. The object of this legislation was to ensure to Great Britain a good supply of seamen, who on the outbreak of war would be available for the fleet, and as far as possible to reduce the number of foreign ships and seamen, and thus to give our owners a monopoly of sea-commerce, and weaken the navies of our opponents in case of war.

In 1849, owing to the rise of the ideas of which Free Trade is the outcome, the Navigation Act was repealed, the exclusive

rights of the British ship to certain spheres of trade were abrogated, and the only restriction now imposed upon the vessel desirous of hoisting the British flag is that her owner must be either a British subject or a "Body corporate, established under and subject to the laws of some part of the King's dominions, and having their principal place of business in these dominions." An ordinary joint-stock company such as the White Star Line may fully comply with the latter paragraph, even if all the shareholders are Americans. Therefore the fact that the shareholders of a British company have sold most of their shares in certain ships to Americans does not force the ships to haul down the British flag, and it gives them no right whatever to hoist the American flag. A British ship may not only be in the hands of foreign shareholders, but she may have a foreign master or a foreign owner. The Americans, on the other hand, holding strongly to the virtues of Protection, retain very much the same kind of law as the old Navigation Act. Ships hoisting the American flag must be American built and American manned, as well as American owned; they have in return exclusive rights to the trade from one American port to another. But these conditions render an American ship terribly expensive. She will cost in American shipyards from 25 to 35 per cent more than if built in Europe, and the wages of her crew would be fully 30 per cent

higher than those paid by her European rivals. Moreover, the American seaman, ready and willing to cross the Atlantic, is an exceedingly scarce article. It is one of the great curiosities of maritime history that, whereas in the early part of the last century no country in the world had such a large proportion of ocean-going seamen to its population as the United States, there is now no country with a corresponding sea-board that has so few seamen trading to foreign ports. Since the American Civil War wages and employment have been so good ashore in the States that the attractions of a sea-life have completely palled on the native-born American. The few "American" seamen to be found in ships making foreign voyages comprise a large proportion of naturalised aliens. The retention of the principles of the Navigation Act in America has completely failed to endow that Republic with a large supply of seamen, and there can be no doubt that, owing to the impossibility of American ships competing successfully, from the financial point of view, with those of Germany and Great Britain, an American capitalist who wishes to invest in the shipping which carry American goods and American purchases must needs invest his money under the British flag. German ships are doing well, and he might like to take shares in one of the two great German companies; but he will not be very hospitably received, nor find his position a pleasant one.

We cannot abolish the

American capitalist. As long as the United States produces men of hard work, good brains, and great business capacity, we shall find great stores of capital on the other side of the Atlantic: the question is, Shall we welcome this capital into our shipping adventures, or shall we force the American investor to build his ships in America, man them with Americans, and then to engage in fierce competition with ourselves? At present, granted that the ships are American owned to this extent, that the profits (or losses) go into (or come out of) American pockets, still they were built by British workmen, out of British material, are commanded by British officers, are on the British Register, fly the British flag, and stand in the same position as other British ships as to employment in war. What that position is we shall now examine. From the Naval point of view it is most important.

In considering a state of war it is unnecessary to go into the question of such wars as the Franco-German or Russo-Turkish, in which both Great Britain and America were neutral: it is only in those wars in which the United States or Great Britain was fighting another sea-Power that the status of the ships of the Combine would be important. If the United States engaged one or more of the Continental sea-Powers, not a likely contingency, it might happen that the United States Government would wish to buy or charter a number of mer-

chant ships for use as auxiliary cruisers, transports, colliers, &c. Under these circumstances the first ships selected would naturally be those of the Combine. The syndicate would be as ready to sell as any purely British company which was offered a good bargain: it is extremely doubtful if their patriotism would save the U.S. Government any dollars. At the same time, as happened in the Spanish-American war, there would probably be similar purchases of purely British ships. The ships thus bought or chartered would no longer be available for carrying United States products, and there would be a greater demand for shipping generally, which would benefit other shipowners. If the ships bought proved of material advantage to the Americans, there would possibly be diplomatic protests against Great Britain by the European Power, the tendency of the affair being generally to alienate Great Britain and the Continental Power, and, *per contra*, to bring her nearer to America.

If, on the other hand, Great Britain was engaged with one or more Continental Powers, there would be great openings for neutral commerce in all such trade as was seriously endangered by the war. As of old, American ships would have a great opportunity, and it is quite conceivable that the U.S. Congress might pass such laws as would admit the ships of the Combine under the Stars and Stripes. These "American" ships would trade unmolested to and from Great Britain,

always supposing that the Continental belligerents admitted the reality and validity of the transfer. The result would be that British shipowners would be weighted by war insurance, from which the Americans would be free. But other companies than those in the Combine might equally pass under the American flag, and it is not clear that the existence of the Combine would make so much difference in the number of ships transferred. Moreover, the nation generally would profit if goods came in cheaply in neutral ships, and the British Navy would have fewer trading ships to safeguard. If our enemies refused to acknowledge the validity of the transfer, and condemned captured ships with the lately hoisted Stars and Stripes, this would tend to bring the United States into the war on the British side.

If the British Government required any of the White Star or other ships in the Combine, they could make a bid for them, as they could for any other ship or ships, and if the bid was refused, they could as an extreme measure pass an Act of Parliament giving power to take them compulsorily. And this could be enforced anywhere save in a foreign harbour. In the unfortunate and most improbable eventuality of war breaking out between Great Britain and America, the trade between the contending Powers would necessarily cease, and many ships would be likely to be laid up unemployed. It is possible that on the outbreak of war some of the syndicate

ships in American ports might be seized as American prizes, but the same misfortune might have happened had they never joined the syndicate. At any rate, being manned by British crews, there is no reason that they should behave differently to other British ships. If the Americans desired to use merchant ships against us, they might equip prizes for this purpose, — whether syndicate ships or others would make no difference. They would of course have to man them with Americans.

A few words are desirable as to the subsidies paid by the Admiralty to certain ships. This subject is being investigated by a Committee, whose report may throw further light on a subject which I will not profess to explain. If the said ships have been built with certain expensive modifications to suit the ideas of the Admiralty, that would be a good reason: but is this so? It seems doubtful if they differ from other non-subsidised ships. At any rate, we are only spending some £75,000 per annum, so there is not much at stake; still it is well to know exactly how we stand for the present, and what our future policy is to be. In the Russian war-scare of 1885 the Navy was most wretchedly provided with cruisers. If we had gone to war then, we must have taken up a number of mail-steamers, as they were the only vessels in Great Britain with the necessary speed. But now our cruisers capable of running 18 knots outnumber the merchant-ships of that

speed in the proportion of 5 to 1. An auxiliary cruiser, improvised as such from the passenger-steamer, cannot be brought up to a much greater fighting value than that of a third-class cruiser: her guns may be better, and coal endurance greatly superior, but her protection is less, especially for engines and boilers, and her manœuvring powers inferior. If a third-class cruiser, lasting fifteen years, costs £225,000¹ to build and keep in repair, or £15,000 a-year, it might be worth while to pay that amount to a shipping firm in order that they should provide and maintain a 19-knot ship which would not otherwise be built. But it is extremely doubtful if this offer would be accepted. The number of 19-knot craft that can pay their way in the passenger and mail trade is very limited, and even £15,000 per annum would not induce a firm to run a 19-knot ship empty.

At present, as remarked above, the ships of the Combine employ British seamen, including a sprinkling of Naval Reserve men. As long as the British flag flies over them, these men, in the utterly improbable event of their being unwilling to join the British Navy, could be forced to do so anywhere except in a foreign port. All that a malignant successor of Mr Morgan could do would be to get his ship into an American port before the Naval

Reserve was called out, and keep her there eating her head off till Congress could be induced to pass a law to admit her under the American flag. And even if this was accomplished, the Naval Reserve men would have to be naturalised as Americans in some way, or they could not venture into a British port. Moreover, the importance of merchant seamen for manning the Navy is not one tithe what it was. The Navy no longer expects the shipowner to enter a large number of apprentices, train them as seamen, have them ready to man the Navy on the outbreak of war, and take them once more into his employ on the declaration of peace. The Navy can now count on the services of 140,000 men without drawing one from the merchant marine. Whether for good or evil the services are drawing farther and farther apart. The merchant seaman will have all his work cut out in war-time in carrying out his business of supplying the country with food and raw materials, &c., and in this work the syndicate vessels will be delighted to take their part, as being a very lucrative business.

As long as the ships of the Combine are under the British flag, the Americans who have shares in them will be deeply interested—even to the bottom of their pockets—in the ascendancy of the British Navy, on

¹ Without armament and other fittings, which cannot fairly be considered in the comparison, as the Naval Estimates would have to provide them for the merchant cruiser.

which their ships rely for protection. Indeed the formation of the great trust points decidedly in the direction of, at any rate, benevolent neutrality, if not of alliance.

In conclusion, I see no grounds for a scare. The very terms of the arrangement show that the Americans consider British-built ships the best for their money: there are no signs that our officers and seamen can or will be ousted, as long as they prove themselves good men. If freights rise as a result of combination, this ought to benefit Great Britain, which is still the great carrying Power of the world. If Mr Morgan had "pooled" with the Germans, the outlook would have been distinctly dark; as it is, there seems little to groan over. If some of our shipping business is to go into other hands because the present generation may not be equal to their forefathers in surpassing all others in building, running, and managing ships, it is far better that the business should go to our most reliable

purveyors, our cousins across the Atlantic, than into the hands of a jealous European neighbour. Our country must absolutely depend for many, many years to come on the cheap and rapid transit of food and goods across the Atlantic; and in this transit the Americans are equally interested with ourselves. I can see no sound reason why there should not be cordial co-operation between the two nations in peace, which must tend towards alliance in war. If any of the displaced British capital should be utilised for improving the transit to the King's possessions beyond the seas, this would be decidedly beneficial. It is not our British way to cry to Heracles to lift our waggon out of the slough. If we have driven sleepily and heedlessly on to shaky ground, and others are getting ahead of us with their goods, let us wake up, put our shoulder to the wheel, and keep our eyes lifting in the future.

ACTIVE LIST.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE KING'S CORONATION — ENGLAND'S LOVE OF PAGEANTRY — ANTIQUITY OF THE CORONATION CEREMONY — SYMBOLISM OF THE SERVICE — SPLENDOUR OF THE RITES — THE KING'S VAST EMPIRE — THE FEUDALISM OF TO-DAY — THE NATION AT PEACE — REPRESENTATION OF THE COLONIES — CONTINENTAL APPRECIATION OF THE KING.

WE are constantly warned by millionaires and others that the practical century in which we live should profess a wholesome contempt for all the pomps of outward show. Nothing should be tolerated, declare our mentors, that does not afford an immediate and comfortable profit. The pageants of the old world, according to the new gospel of business, are as threadbare as its courtesies, and the most that they can achieve is to waste money and impede the traffic. And then, as if to prove that a loud voice does not always trumpet the truth, London surrenders itself with cheerful enthusiasm to witness the crowning of its King. For many weeks the city has covered its face with hoardings; most complacently has it darkened its windows and packed its streets with timber. No sacrifice is too great for so august an occasion. Our King and Queen are to be crowned. Our Sovereign, in due accord with solemn and ancient rites, will make a public compact with his people; and the people's love of splendour and ceremony is as ardently expressed as ever it was in the days when romance triumphed over greed, when all honest citizens delighted in the magnificence of jewelled ladies and richly caparisoned knights.

The King will be crowned at Westminster—crowned with no less pomp and circumstance than his ancestors. His "passage" from Palace to Abbey will not differ in grandeur or arrangement from the "passage" of "our most dread Sovereign Lady Queene Elizabeth"; only he will set out from Buckingham Palace, while she set out from the Tower of London. As you read the Service that is to be performed, and the Ceremonies that are to be observed, on the 26th day of June, you imagine yourself far back in the past. The same great names, the same high offices, are repeated to-day, which give so rich a colour to the pages of the old Chronicles. "Sirs," will say the Archbishop of Canterbury, "I here present unto you King Edward, the Undoubted King of this Realm: Wherefore All you who are come this day to do your Homage, Are you willing to do the same?" At these majestic words "the People signify their willingness and joy, by loud and repeated acclamations, all with one voice crying out, God save King Edward!" Turn, then, to the crowning of Henry VI., and you will see the same form of Recognition observed wellnigh five hundred years ago. "Thenne the Archebyschoppe of Can-

tyrbury made a proclamacyon" —'tis one William Gregory who writes—"sayynge in thys wyse: 'Syrys, here comythe Harry, Kyng Harry the V. hys sone, humlyche to God and Hooly Chyrche, askynge the crowne of thys realme by ryght and dyscent of heritage. Yf ye holde you welle plesyd with alle and wylle be plesyd with hym, say you now, Ye! and holde uppe youre handys.' And thenne all the pepylle cryde with one voyce, Ye! ye!" As it was done then, so shall it be done now, and nothing will be more memorable in King Edward's coronation than this observance of ancient forms. There burns in the heart of England a flame of conservatism which neither change of dynasty nor encroaching democracy can extinguish. The land which we inhabit to-day would seem strange indeed to an Englishman of the sixteenth century could he revisit the upper earth. The stern houses, the sober suits of the citizens, the noisy bustle of the streets, would doubtless distress and appal him. Yet if he looked beneath a somewhat sorry surface, this strayling from another world would discover that the changes which had transformed the outward appearance of his land were for the most part material. The ancient spirit which conquered the Spaniard is still alive; the ancient love of formality and display merely languishes for lack of exercise, and an Englishman of whatever period you choose would understand the significance of the pageant which on the 26th day of June

will distinguish the Abbey. Nor is this adherence to time-honoured forms the accident of a wayward fancy. It is an essential part of our constitution. No human being would be great enough to be a great king were he not strengthened by the august tradition of kingship. A divine right is no longer attributed to our sovereigns; but the rights and privileges granted to him who piously follows in the footsteps of monarchs dead and gone are not lightly accepted, and cannot be easily betrayed. Nor is the ceremony of coronation a merely decorative progress. It is in another aspect an interchange of solemn undertakings. The King by an elaborate symbolism promises to protect and to revere the realm to whose governance he is called. The People, through its chosen representatives, swears fealty to its King, and all the nations of the earth are witnesses to the lofty compact.

As we have said, the same great names, the same high offices as of old lend lustre to the ceremony. That there may be no break in the chain of history, it is still the Lord Great Chamberlain who girds the sword about the King. The officer of the Jewel House delivers the King's Ring to the Archbishop, while the Lord of the Manor of Worksop once again supports the King's Right Arm. The Archbishop of Canterbury has changed but his name—in title and dignity he is what he was five centuries ago; and there is no proof of continuity which does not enhance the significance of the

Coronation. We, therefore, regret the more deeply such variations as will be made in the ceremony. No more will the Herb-women strew sweet herbs in the pathway of the Queen: yet the custom was not without elegance, and savoured of a simpler age than our own. But, above all, we shall miss the Hereditary Champion, who for centuries flung down his glove in token of challenge to the King's enemies. As early as the coronation of Richard II., Sir John Dymmok, who held the Manor of Scrivelsby by the service "of being armed the day of the King's crowning and being ready to defend the King by his body, if any should deny the King's majesty," threw down the glove, and unhappily died without recovering "the best horse and trappings and best suit of armour, save one, which the King possessed," whereto he was entitled. Nor, until the Coronation of Queen Victoria, had this rite ever been omitted. How fine a spectacle the challenge afforded you may see in Holinshed's description of Queen Elizabeth's coronation. "On Sundaie the five and twentieth of Januarie," says the Chronicle, "her majestie was with great solemnitie crowned at Westminster in the abbeie church there, by doctor Oglethorpe bishop of Carleill. She dined in Westminster hall, which was richlie hung, and everiething ordered in such roiall maner, as to such a regall and most solemne feast appertained. In the meanetime, whilst her grace sat at dinner

sir Edward Dimmocke Knight, hir champion by office, came riding into the hall in faire complet armor, mounted upon a beautifull courser, richlie trapped in cloth of gold, entred the hall, and in the midst thereof cast downe his gauntlet: with offer to fight with him in hir quarell, that should denie hir to be the righteous and lawfull queene of this realme. The queene taking a cup of gold full of wine, dranke to him thereof, and sent it to him for his fee, together with the cover." It was a noble scene, which we would willingly see reproduced. But King Edward VII. will not dine in Westminster Hall, and the Dymoke of to-day must content himself with carrying the Royal Standard.

And when the ceremony is finished, when the last echo of the organ has died away, when the King and Queen are come into St Edward's Chapel, when the Archbishop has laid the Sceptre with the Dove upon the Altar there, when the King has given the Golden Spurs and St Edward's Staff into the hands of the Dean, what means the Service that has been performed and the Ceremonies that have been observed? The King is as securely King before as after the Coronation. This realm of Britain is never without a ruling Sovereign. The time-honoured cry, "The King is dead! Long live the King!" has a practical meaning. But it is right that so great an event as the accession to the throne should be magnificently commemorated. Monarchs there have been who, not content

with one coronation, have been crowned in several loyal cities of their kingdom, and all have assumed their duties with what ceremony they might in the presence of their People. And there is in the ceremony of coronation, as it has been shaped by the centuries, a curiously significant symbolism. There is no detail of the service which has not a serious meaning, which is not a symbol of kingly duty and honour. The anointing with oil, which carries us back to the sanctification of the Hebrew kings, is appropriate to the titular head of the Church. The Archbishop anoints the King in the form of a Cross on the Crown of the Head, on the Breast, and on the Palms of both the Hands. "As Solomon was anointed King by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet"—such are the words of the service—"so be you anointed, blessed, and consecrated King over this people, whom the Lord your God hath given you to rule and govern." So the Spurs, wherewith the Lord Great Chamberlain touches his Majesty's heels, are the emblem of Knighthood; and the Sword, which the King receives from the Altar of God, and which is girt about him by the Lord Great Chamberlain, shall be used for the terror and punishment of evil-doers, and for the protection and encouragement of those that do well. "With this sword," saith the Archbishop, "do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the Holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone

to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order: that doing these things you may be glorious in all virtue." So the *Armilla* and the Imperial Mantle are as "the Robe of Righteousness," "the garments of Salvation," while the Orb set under the Cross is to remind the King that "the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer."

Then the King is invested with the ring, "the ensign of Kingly Dignity, and of the Defence of the Catholic Faith"; then the Archbishop delivers the Sceptre with the Cross into the King's Right Hand as "the ensign of Kingly Power and Justice," and into the King's Left Hand the Sceptre with the Dove, "the Rod of Equity and Mercy"; and at each investiture the duties of the King are made manifest. Then at last the King sits in King Edward's Chair, and "the Dean of Westminster brings the Crown, and the Archbishop taking it of him reverently putteth it upon the King's Head." Thereupon the People, with loud shouts, cry, God save the King! the Peers and Kings of Arms put on their Coronets; the Trumpets sound; and the great guns at the Tower are shot off. Thus Edward VII. will be crowned King; thus he will be solemnly consecrated to the service of his People and his Church. But before the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Princes of the Blood, and the Peers of the Realm do

their homage, the Holy Bible, taken from off the Altar, is presented to His Majesty. "Our gracious King," so speaks the Archbishop, "we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; This is the Royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God,"—the simple eloquence of which words could not be bettered or overpraised.

Indeed, from beginning to end of this plain service the style is perfectly adapted to the dignity of a great occasion. There is never a word too much; there is never a line without its proper emotion. The symbolism is natural and appropriate, and it is in these essential terms, and in no others, that a king should be enthroned before his People. The King is anointed and crowned in the twofold character of priest and warrior, and as you read the service you cannot but think of the priest-king, who of old in the grove of Aricia defended himself against the murderous successor destined most surely to supplant him. But our king assumes his office under happier auspices. None lurks secretly in the wood to do him harm, and he will live out his allotted span of years secure in the trust and affection of his People. And if the effect of the service is profound upon us, who read it dispassionately in the study, what must be its effect upon the King, for whom it is composed, for whom it is performed in all the splendour which pomp and gravity can suggest? How can he, who has been thus magnifi-

cently enthroned, ever forget the duty which he owes to the country which so highly honours him? How can he, in the future, do other than sink himself in the responsibility of his office? How can he forget that henceforth all his wisdom and all his energy are dedicated to the furtherance of justice and the protection of his realm?

But though the fashion of the Coronation is old, the circumstances which attend the crowning of Edward VII. are new and unexampled. No other king has ever been called to rule so vast an Empire, to be the overlord of countries so many and so remote. When Queen Victoria came to the throne, she was Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and she was Queen of little else. The Colonies, if they were remembered, were thought of as an encumbrance. India was controlled by a chartered company; Australia was the home of adventurers and convicts; Africa was still savage and unexplored. But Edward VII. ascends a throne marvellously enriched by sixty years of wise government. Under his mother's good and godly rule the old prejudice against the colonies disappeared. The War Office was no longer held competent to watch the interests of our fellow-citizens across the seas, and a larger Empire was added to the Crown by peace and prudence than ever the Emperors of Rome compassed by the sword. It is, then, to a noble heritage that Edward VII. succeeds. Princes and statesmen from all parts of the earth will pay him homage, and will come to his

coronation, not as the conquered subjects of Rome, triumphantly enchained, but as free governors of free states, who bend the knee for the feoffs which they hold. Feudalism has died in England, to be revived in an ampler spirit all the world over. The bejewelled princes of India, the shrewd Ministers from the Colonies, the dusky monarchs of Africa, do homage for the territories which they govern in untrammelled freedom. Nor are they like the overbold barons of the middle age. They gather round the throne in no grudging mood; theirs is not a forced obeisance. From wherever they come they bring with them that spirit of pride and loyalty upon which the Empire is based. They do not neglect the welfare of their own countries, but they remember that their own safety and prosperity depend upon the safety and prosperity of the Empire of which they are a part. What monarch that ever wore a crown could point in arrogance to such distinguished subjects as the Maharajah of Jaipur, to such active and intelligent statesmen as govern Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, to such faithful servants as King Lewanika, the Paramount Chief of the Barotse kingdom? Nor do these feudal princes and rulers hold their territories on any hard terms. Their service is the more profoundly devoted because it is willingly rendered. The chain which binds them to their King is the stronger for its very looseness; it is the more secure because it is never rudely strained. Independent within their own

borders, they are the more eager to recognise the overlordship of our King, and to share in the pride which membership in the British Empire amply justifies. And the tie which unites the mother country to her many and diverse dependencies has been strengthened during the past few years by services rendered to, and sacrifices made for, Great Britain. Nothing promotes friendship so actively as favours willingly conferred and dangers shared in common. The part which the Colonies have played in the war recently finished needs not to be praised, or even recalled to mind. Yet we value their aid, not for its own sake, valuable as it was, but because on the field of battle the Colonies were met together to prove their devotion to the country whence long ago they went forth, and because under the common banner they learned to know one another, and to pay the just debt of loyalty which the Empire exacts. Canada and Australia fought side by side for the first time, and they fought for that fair principle of colonisation which has brought prosperity to themselves. Henceforth South Africa will know the freedom which Canada and Australia long have enjoyed; it will also in the future pay the allegiance which Canada and Australia long have paid; and history cannot (we think) show another example of aid given by loyal colonies in order that the policy which has prospered them should be imposed upon another. Thus Edward VII.'s

Coronation will be distinguished from all past ceremonies by that fine spirit of feudalism which, no excuse for rapine and exaction, proves the British Empire united in sympathy and in ambition, in policy and in hope.

But, above all, the King is fortunate in that he makes his progress to Westminster with peace amply assured. Though the issue of the recent war was never in doubt, it is none the less happy that the public rejoicing should be interrupted by no note of conflict. The pro-Boers have done their best to injure their fatherland; but at last the Boers have discovered the true worth of their interested if injudicious supporters, and have honourably preferred an honest foe to a false friend. And they have acted wisely. For while the honest foe of yesterday may easily become the comrade of to-morrow, the false friend can never reinspire the trust which he has forfeited. The King, then, publicly ascends the throne a few weeks after the establishment of a cordial, even an enthusiastic, peace; he is the first monarch to assume the overlordship of the Transvaal and the Orange Colony; and though for the moment his newest colonies claim our keenest interest, they are but a small corner of a vast Empire, which includes more men and more races than ever bowed the knee to a single monarch. The occasion, therefore, is worthy of all the splen-

dour which will distinguish it, nor will the People fall below the occasion. We have of late displayed a love of ceremony which for many years seemed alien to the English character. The long widowhood of Queen Victoria discouraged magnificence, and Englishmen began to forget that taste for pageantry which once was the marvel of the world. Time was when our countrymen loved a show as the Romans loved the circus. The chronicles are eloquent concerning the progresses of Queen Elizabeth, and the memoirs describe with a wealth of detail the gorgeous ceremonies in which later kings played their part. George II. did not come to the throne in a blaze of glory, yet the spectacle of his coronation was said to have been the grandest ever seen. M. de Saussure,¹ a sympathetic traveller, has left us such a description of the spectacle as easily convinces us of its splendour. He covers sixteen pages with a mere enumeration of those privileged to form part of the procession. But it is not the length of the procession which most profoundly impressed him. "What embellished this ceremony greatly," says he, "was the magnificence of the jewels. The peeresses were covered with them, and wore them in great quantities on the fronts of their bodices, in their hair, as clasps for fastening their robes and cloaks, without counting their necklaces, earrings, and rings."

¹ A Foreign View of England in the Reigns of George I. and George II. The Letters of Monsieur de Saussure to his Family. London: John Murray. 1902.

The poor Queen suffered in the cause of grandeur: "The skirt of her robe was so much embroidered with jewels that it threw out a surprising radiance, and she next day declared that what had fatigued her most was the weight of this skirt." Nor was this astonishing radiance the only memorable embellishment of King George's crowning. The music in the Abbey was conducted by "the celebrated Mr Handel," and though we may match the radiance of the jewels, the great musician's admirable symphonies will never again be rendered with that simple dignity which his presence assured.

The coronation of George IV. was yet more splendid. Though he came to the throne unattended by the enthusiasm of his People, he was determined to provide a pageant which should dazzle the least sympathetic eye. He omitted nothing, not even the Herbwoman and her maidens, and the Royal Champion rode up through Westminster Hall most bravely attended. The banquet was lavish after the mediæval fashion, and the King's lieges drank a hundred gallons of iced punch, besides hundreds of dozens of wine. But not even the extravagance of the feast won the hearts of the King's subjects, and he sought popularity in vain. Queen Victoria, on the other hand, ascended the throne to a chorus of enthusiasm which will be echoed for her son. Greville's account of the ceremony and its preparations might have been written to-day.

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Then as now the uproar and confusion of London were indescribable. On the day before, says Greville, "horsemen, footmen, carriages, squeezed, jammed, intermingled; the pavement blocked up with timbers, hammering and knocking, and falling fragments stunning the ears and threatening the head; not a mob here and there, but the town all mob, thronging, bustling, staring, and gaping and gazing, at everything, at anything, or at nothing." Then as now "the Park was one vast encampment"; then as now the interest and enthusiasm were from the heart. Yet this is the greater occasion, for Edward VII. inherits, as we have said, the great Empire which during his mother's years of wise government has been added to the Crown.

So we are returning to an older fashion of splendour, which, during the last reign, was falling into forgetfulness, and we return to it without regret. Life is not a mere hunt after gold; it is not a mere routine of duty baldly accomplished. Splendour is a pleasant privilege of the Court, and kings honour their subjects by appropriate parade. And while the Service performed in the Abbey is all symbolic, symbolic too are the visitors who come from all ends of the earth to do our King homage. Their presence symbolises the terms of peace and friendship upon which we live with all the world. Of our own colonies and dependencies we have already spoken. They send their representatives in unalloyed

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pride and goodwill,—a pride which we feel in return when we remember the many races who live beneath the protection of our flag. May we not be forgiven a little arrogance when we receive as fellow-subjects Gurkhas and Sikhs, Pathans and Rajputs, Mahrattas and Afridis: when we recognise as cousins, near akin, the intrepid Canadians and the loyal Australasians? But all those who visit London for the Coronation are not of our kindred nor of our Empire. Our neighbours in Europe, they too send their representatives, and for the moment at least bury the hatchet. During the last few years we have been insulted by the grosser personages of every country. History cannot show a parallel to this universal, unjustified hatred, a hatred which, great as it is, seems all the greater through the garrulity of journalists and the rapidity of the telegraph. The hatred, if it be based upon anything, is based upon jealousy; and though the neighbouring Governments have never been hostile, they have been powerless to check the falsehoods of their press and people. But, as we have said, the hatchet is buried,—not deep perhaps, yet out of sight,—and we may receive our visitors with the less rancour as the triumph is ours. Moreover, in this campaign of slander and hate the King has escaped without a scratch. The success of England may be bitter to France, which knows not how to colonise. The generous treatment which we extend to the Boers may be

distasteful to Germany, which still treats the Poles as “rabbits”; but King Edward is popular both in Germany and France. To him, therefore, Germans and French may pay a sincere respect, and there will be no dissention at the coronation. Even those who hate the kingdom will applaud the *bonhomie* and tact of the King.

The King carries in his crown a jewel won by the Black Prince at Crécy. The sword which is girt at his side belonged, says history, to Edward the Confessor. And this jewel and this sword eloquently prove the unity of our annals. The long line of tradition is unbroken; no link is lacking in the chain which binds the present to the past. But while the Coronation makes us think on the one hand of Edward the Confessor and the Black Prince, on the other it reminds us of those many new lands overseas, which are now bound to us by the ties of kinship and affection, and which were all undiscovered when the most of Edward VII.'s ancestors went in procession to Westminster. It is the strangest mixture of new and old. The forms are as old as England; a part of the Empire is as new as yesterday; and thus King Edward VII. comes to the throne dignified by tradition and strengthened by enterprise. The auspices are good, and it is with a sure pride in to-day, a serene confidence in to-morrow, that his people will accompany him to Westminster Abbey with loyal shouts of “God Save the King!”

THE END OF THE BOER WAR.

AFTER nearly two years and eight months of a hard-fought struggle, peace has been proclaimed. The satisfaction is almost universal that a war so costly in life and treasure, and for at least during the last half of it uselessly prolonged, after all its issues had been irrevocably decided, has been brought to a close. Not even our direst enemies on the Continent—and they are numerous and implacable—can really regret it. According to all accounts, the Boer prisoners in various parts of the world and in the concentration camps acclaimed it with unbounded enthusiasm. Perhaps Mr Kruger and Dr Leyds may mourn over the last embers of their extinguished self-importance, and may at last appreciate the depth of shame to which history will consign them. But Boers and Britons, their leaders and rank and file, who have manfully borne the brunt of this deadly strife, may be all equally congratulated on its termination. If the former have been vanquished, they have certainly not been disgraced. They have struggled gallantly and manfully for their independence, with a pertinacity which has perhaps been carried beyond reason, and the disposition of the victors will be to welcome them as worthy subjects of the Crown, who may be trusted to show as much loyalty and devotion to the empire in the future as they have done to the States to which they have

hitherto belonged. That their lot in the future will be far more worthy and prosperous than in the past is a reasonable forecast. The retrospect cannot be one which, on a fair review of the circumstances, can afford them genuine satisfaction. The Transvaalers, to their cost, produced a grand old man, to all countries apparently a source of danger and weakness. Gold and guns were his sole expedients of administration,—to plunder the one and menace with the other. With the aid of a Hollander gang he laid broad and deep a system of extortion and oppression till the lives of his Uitlander subjects became intolerable and the paramount Power was outraged at every turn. The Orange Free Staters, after half a century of peaceable and orderly administration, and without a single grievance so much as alleged against us, suddenly abandoned their prudent course of policy and joined the Transvaalers in their insensate ultimatum. To belong to States liable to fall into the hands of those who can thus recklessly pilot them to destruction was tantamount to having life, liberty, and fortune at the mercy of unprincipled adventurers, ignorant alike of policy and of the arts of government. The Boers, as the result of this war, will simply have to abandon all ideas of a Dutch South African dominion. In all other respects—in all that makes life worth living, security for life

and fortune, freedom to develop your faculties in the way best suited to your circumstances, in the midst of social order, exempt from being commandeered at a moment's notice—the Boers will be better off in the future than in the past. The so-called independence which they have lost made them the slaves of designing politicians with little or no knowledge of their craft. The independence which they gain will be exactly on the same footing eventually as that enjoyed by all British colonists, and by Boers in the Cape Colony, in Natal, in Rhodesia, and other parts of South Africa, where they have thriven and even possessed more political power than they ever enjoyed in the Transvaal.

The war which has just closed was not a war motivated against their independence. Great Britain has shown the greatest reluctance during the last half century to increase her commitments in South Africa. She was rejoiced when the Orange River State during all that time showed capacity for self-government and relieved her of all responsibility. She regretted that the Transvaal was not equally well administered. Boer independence was a thing which we would have cherished rather than subverted. The war was one for dominion, carefully devised, steadily elaborated, and persistently fought. The issue was whether or not the British should be forcibly ejected from South Africa, and a Dutch dominion under a Dutch flag established in its stead. The

individual burgher has had very little to do with that issue, but his so-called independence was staked for him by those who raised it. That issue has been decided in our favour, with the practical result that the Boers will be even better off than before, though deprived of the day-dreams which outsiders had instilled into their mind.

That struggle was sooner or later bound to come. The relations between the two races were such that until it had been fought out, and both sides had come to a clear understanding as to which race was to be the dominant one, a *modus vivendi* seemed impossible to attain. There seems to have been in the past an ingrained antipathy between the Boer in his untutored state and the Briton, born of divergent ideas which coloured differently their several habits, aspirations, and motives. It is shown in a marked way in their relations to the natives. While the Boer is fiercely determined to hold him as inferior, even to the extent of classing him with the lower creation, the Briton errs in the other extreme, and would invest him with a fictitious equality which nature and inherited characteristics do not sanction. It is also shown in the greater aptitude for civilisation and its virtues possessed by the one race, while the instinct of the other is to fly from it and revel as long as possible in the wilder life which, under the name of pastoral simplicity, disregards all laws of health, cleanliness, and decency. Man for man, and regarded from

the point of view of a well-developed animal, trained to hunting, farming, and the outdoor life of the beast of prey, the Boer often found himself the superior of the Briton, and harboured notions of ascendancy which in his ignorance left entirely out of sight the superior resources of civilisation. These latter, which of course are in the long-run the determining factor between rival races, were outside the range of his vision. He never encountered them, and valued himself as, in his own opinion, the better rider, the better marksman, with keener faculties of sight and hearing. Contempt is usually in proportion to ignorance, and as the Boer's knowledge and experience were small, his arrogance and assertion of superiority in his restricted circle were almost boundless. These, no doubt, were faults which time and education would have gradually removed. But unfortunately they were graven deeply on his heart by the Majuba capitulation, the abandonment of our friends to his mercies, and the surrender of British supremacy rather than risk a general rising of the Boers. From that date the evidence is overwhelming that a racial animosity grew up, and a fierce determination, first to assert Boer independence, and afterwards, as the gold discoveries and the mining industries brought them wealth, to establish Boer supremacy and Boer dominion. The Briton, lulled to sleep by the fumes of his own magnanimity, as displayed in 1881, was hard to awaken as to what was

going on to imperil his empire. The raid, though we say no word in defence of that disastrous exploit, fortunately came just in time. The British at last woke up. The German Emperor's telegram, joined to the previous declaration of German statesmen that Boer independence was a German interest, was an absolute encouragement to Mr Kruger, and a covert invitation to the European Powers to intervene. From that hour sooner or later war was inevitable. The claim was put forward that the Transvaal was an independent international sovereign State, in defiance of treaties which expressly provided to the contrary. Mr Chamberlain asserted the claim of the paramount Power. All the rest was mere matter of detail. The refusal of the franchise to the Uitlanders, the destruction of the independence of the courts of justice, the dynamite and other monopolies, the liquor laws, the police oppression, the corruption and extortion which went on and finally found expression in a petition to the Queen, were all mere items for diplomatic representation. War was inevitable directly the Boers were armed to the teeth and taught to believe that the vast military preparations which had been secretly and successfully made, placed them in a position of military supremacy against which the British, separated from them by 6000 miles of ocean, would struggle in vain. Until that spirit of boisterous self-assertion had been exorcised, it was in vain to expect that the two races could live quietly

and peacefully side by side. Now that it has been exorcised, there remains no reason that we know of why the fierce conflict, which has been so often softened by mutual acts of kindness to the wounded, and by our unstinted care of their wives and children, should not lead to an enduring friendship similar to that which we have experienced at Boer hands in other parts of our South African dominion.

Although the predominant sentiment with all of us must be one of hope that a long course of South African peace, prosperity, and friendly racial rivalry may be in store for us, it is impossible to overlook at this moment the grateful applause which is due to the British Government for the result which has been achieved. From the incident of the raid to the present hour the times must have been for them full of continuous anxiety and of energetic effort. There was not merely the possibility of active assistance as well as the certainty of moral support to the Boers, but before conclusions could be tried in South Africa there was the standing imbroglio in Egypt and the necessity of recovering the Sudan to be dealt with. Armenian massacres, European "concerts" to be maintained in the nearer and the remoter East, a Venezuelan controversy to be replaced by American friendship, and a world-wide war to be averted as an incident of the Spanish-American dispute, have shrunk into details of a forgotten past, instead of blossoming into portentous mischiefs. But when

we read the animated invectives about Boer preparations not having been stopped, and our own measures of defence on the spot not having been expedited, we cannot help recalling that the Nile expedition from the first risked the possibility of war with France, owing to a certain expedition which had traversed Central Africa and reached Fashoda with some undisclosed and very expansive pretensions. It was essential to get that question out of the way, with its portentous possibilities, before we could be at liberty to cope with that so-called Boer independence which Germany had declared to be her interest and the Emperor's telegram had threatened to support by German arms. One question was enough to have on our hands at one time. Fortunately for us, when the Boer preparations had reached the point at which their ultimatum seemed to them a prudent proceeding, although our preparations were sadly deficient, they at least were adequate to the task of holding the Boers in check and preventing their access to the sea. No doubt the Christmas of 1899-1900 saw the empire in a greater peril than has ever encompassed it since the Napoleonic wars. But if our general lost his head and talked of surrendering Ladysmith and fortifying himself on the Tugela, the Minister stood firm and ordered him to proceed with its relief or return home. When the extent of Boer power and resources was fully revealed, whatever shortcomings there may have been in the War

Office, it has to be remembered that little more than two short months elapsed from the battle of Colenso to the relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith, and the surrender of Cronje at Paardeburg, which was the beginning of a practically uninterrupted series of victories leading up to the capture of Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. The War Office had changed the scene from virtual defeat to a brilliant career of victory, and it is entitled to more credit than it has received. No doubt the result was due to Lord Roberts's genius and strategy, but neither would have availed if the War Office and Lord Wolseley, the then Commander-in-Chief, had not speedily improvised and equipped an army and despatched it 6000 miles across the seas, practically without an accident. It was a wonderful achievement, and implies antecedent preparations on an extensive scale. Although there may have been much break-down in detail, mismanagement, and disorganisation which experts may be called on to amend, the success of it has excited the admiration, and perhaps the envy and alarm, of surrounding nations, not one of which could have carried out a tithe of the undertaking. War offices and generals must be judged by success or failure. The former will condone any amount of bad management though it should be rectified in the future. The latter is not redeemed by any amount of skill, judgment, and scientific arrangement.

Except for the natural desire to recognise the claims of the

War Office, the moment of concluding peace is not one which we wish to devote to triumph. The predominant feeling is to welcome the Boers within the ranks of the empire as fellow-subjects of the King; but we trust that even this feeling will not exclude a full regard to the claims of friends and others who have suffered severely during the struggle. There will be questions of increasing difficulty as time goes on—between loyalists and Boers, between Boer scouts and those who have so long posed as Boer irreconcilables. They must be solved by justice and firmness, and conciliation must never be carried to the point of weakness. Fortunately, we have in Lord Milner a man of tried resource, who has the confidence of South African loyalists and of the British people. He has carried out thus far the Government policy with splendid success, and we have no doubt he will surmount, if any one can, the difficulties which may yet be in store for us. The chief security, however, for the future lies in the complete surrender of all Boer claim to a separate nationality and independence. They laid down their arms and recognised King Edward VII. as their lawful sovereign. They did so unconditionally. They have put on record their own acknowledgment of complete defeat. In giving authority to their delegates to relinquish independence, they declared that they did so to save the existence of their race. They pointed to their reduced numbers, and to the impossibility of ever getting the

prisoners back. The British ended the war completely masters of the situation, a measure which the past has shown is indispensably necessary to the peace, order, and security of South Africa. The terms which have been granted are such as will liberally aid the Boers to fulfil the new duties which they have undertaken. First, we undertake that the Burghers in parts of South Africa other than the two late republics, and all our prisoners of war, will, on duly declaring their acceptance of the position of subjects of the King, be gradually brought back to their homes. The future civil government is retained entirely in our own hands, though it will give way to self-government "as soon as circumstances permit." Measures will be and have been taken at our expense to assist the Boers back to their homes, and to supply them with food, shelter, and stock necessary to the resumption of their normal occupations. It appears that, as far as matters have gone at present, the Boers, true to the instincts of a thoroughly manly race, having fought out their struggle to the end, will throw aside their antipathies and recognise, in an appreciative and even grateful spirit, the generous and considerate terms on which they will be incorporated into the empire, amounting as they do to a cordial welcome. We have carried on the war on our side with a view to this result, thereby rendering it longer and more burdensome than it would have been if it had been carried on in the spirit which Germany mani-

festated towards France, or the Northern towards the Southern States, and we trust that we shall now reap our reward. It was no slight self-restraint which was practised, amounting as it did to a practical transference from the losing to the winning side of all the burden of providing for the welfare of its helpless members. It was another illustration of Mr Kidd's principle of the present social development, that power is disarmed by the forces of the future.

If this is the position of the vanquished and the prospect before them, what is the position of the victors after their loss of more than 20,000 lives and their expenditure of 230 millions? In the first place, we have carried out in South Africa to the letter the whole of our declared policy. We have done so with the enthusiastic support and co-operation of our colonies, and to their unbounded satisfaction. We have not left in any portion of South Africa between the Zambesi and the Cape, not already possessed by responsible European Powers, a single shred of independent authority anywhere, or any vestige of political organisation which can become the nucleus of organised resistance to our supremacy. Our colonies take note of that with the pride and satisfaction of having contributed to that result. As Mr Chamberlain pointed out the other day, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand sent an army greater than the British army at Waterloo. Our subject-races in India and elsewhere, we

believe, are equally satisfied with, and would gladly have contributed to, that result if far-reaching considerations of policy had allowed us to accept it at their hands. It was interesting to notice that it is claimed for the Jews of the empire by their chief Rabbi that they not only bore a fair share of duty, but actually a larger one than would be warranted by mere numerical proportion. And certain foreign nations who have pursued us with an unreasoning and unworthy spite, which we are prompt to forgive though too prudent to forget, may take note of these circumstances, with such reflections thereupon as their more matured wisdom may suggest. It is said that in some quarters disappointment was felt at the peace, for it was hoped that the resources of the empire would be gradually exhausted, and that South Africa would eventually prove the grave of British power. We decline to believe in this sentiment; but if it exists anywhere, the actual facts of the situation will bring no consolation. It is impossible even to suggest that the Boers have been premature in their surrender. They have carried out their resistance till starvation stared them in the face. One advantage to us of this is that they must feel that if they wished for war, they have had it with a vengeance, have drained to the dregs the cup of its miseries, and will now perhaps, more readily and heartily than a year ago, appreciate the blessings of peace

and the efforts of those who will do their best to mitigate the hardships of their position. That the war has been fought out to the bitter end is one of the gains of the position, and gives a strong guarantee for the continuance of peace.

The thoroughness with which the British policy in South Africa has been carried out, and ascendancy secured, vastly increases the prestige of the empire. Prestige is underrated and even decried by prigs and pedants, but all who are responsible for the maintenance of British authority abroad, and are capable of taking a practical view of things, know its value. It means the accepted authority arising from past achievement, present capacity, and known resolve and resource. Resistance is forbidden by prestige instead of being repelled by force. The sanguinary war which has just closed is the Nemesis which awaits the downfall of prestige resulting from vacillation and weakness under the thinly veiled pretence of magnanimity. That disastrous policy is now closed for South Africa, and with the re-establishment of British prestige, peace and the confidence and credit which are born of a determined policy, resolutely carried out, will inevitably bring social and commercial welfare in their train. The British Empire, thanks to the much decried War Office, comes out of the war far stronger in all the attributes of power and prestige and international influence than it went in. The war will be

known in history as the Great Boer War, and as it seems to be true that from 18,000 to 20,000 men will have surrendered at its close, we have throughout underrated the forces against us. Our three greatest generals must divide the honours of success: Lord Wolseley, with his continuous stream of reinforcements and supplies; Lord Roberts, with his brilliant strategy; Lord Kitchener, with his untiring patience and far-seeing organisation. We owe to Lord Salisbury's Ministry every gratitude and consideration for the anxieties which they must have endured and the brilliant successes which they have won. The disasters of the Gladstone Ministry of 1880-85 have been cancelled, and both in the Old World and the New Great Britain never stood higher. It is due to one distinguished Minister, who has endured the greatest obloquy and perhaps incurred the chief responsibility throughout this prolonged business from the raid to the peace, to recognise the ascendancy of his firmness and genius. Mr Chamberlain had better add to the many things which he has wisely discarded, the retraction, in common with the late Duke of Argyll, of his former antipathy to Lord Beaconsfield. He is in reality the successor of that statesman, and has manfully carried out his policy of imperialism on the lines which he laid down. We may apply to him without exaggeration the lines which Mr Gladstone quoted in reference to his great

rival's victorious return from Berlin—

"Aspice, ut insignis spoliis Marcellus
opimis
Ingreditur, victorque viros supereminet omnes."

There are, however, two circumstances which turn the scales heavily in favour of the elder statesman. Lord Beaconsfield won his signal triumph without war, and maintained unbroken peace at the same time that he vindicated the authority and prestige of this country. He carried out his purpose in spite of the most unscrupulous and determined opposition at home. Mr Chamberlain cannot claim credit for long and clear-sighted persistence of purpose from the very commencement, for he as much as any member of the disastrous Cabinet of 1880-85 was responsible for the Majuba capitulation, and for the initiation of all those circumstances of hostility and arrogance which led so fatally to this sanguinary step. He has, however, with nearly unanimous support from the country, worthily redeemed the earlier blunders; and first by his vigorous and successful resistance to a policy of disintegration, and afterwards by his tenacious and successful maintenance of a policy of consolidation, welding together the colonies in an enthusiastic union with the mother country, and stamping out within our midst the hostility of our late foes, he has achieved a reputation which places him in the foremost rank of British statesmen of any period in our history.

BLACKWOOD'S

EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXLII.

AUGUST 1902.

VOL. CLXXII.

AN ISOLATED CASE.

IT was not splendid isolation—only confluent smallpox of a virulent type, in the city of Tokyo, month of February, and year of our Lord 1897 (or of Jimmu Tennō 2557). It came about this way. Japan, having recently emerged from darkness into light, began to yearn with pity for poor Korea, who had not yet followed suit. It was Korea's acquiescence in the blighting influence of Chinese stagnation that held her so enthralled in medieval gloom; and chivalrous Japan made up its mind that, *coûte que coûte* (for we are dabs at Western languages out there), Korea must be freed, set on her own legs, and have an opportunity of working out her own salvation. What chivalry inspired sound statesmanship indorsed; for was not Russia creeping Chinawards resistless as a glacier, longing for the warm

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water that laps the Korean coast, while China sat stupidly gazing, inert and impotent: a daring effort must be made to dominate the jutting territory, and establish a buffer-state which would keep the huge neighbours of Japan on the coolest of visiting terms. Hence the war of 1894-95, when David faced Goliath, and, being in thorough training, thrashed him. Japan became master of the Liao-tung peninsula, with Port Arthur and other salient points, a barrier-wedge of land which, under Japanese administration, would effectually block the southerly march of Russia. In Far Eastern matters, however, *tout le monde propose, mais la Russie dispose*, and on this occasion at least she so prevailed (our Government sitting on its usual fence) that she induced the two bitterest enemies in Europe to unite with

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her in signing a round-robin, full of sweet reasonableness, which they handed in at Tokyo. This document explained that, though Japan might imagine the Liao-tung to be hers by right of conquest in a fairly fought war, yet Christendom, the patentees of International Law, could by no means countenance indecent "rights" when claimed by victors with a yellow skin: "Drop it, good dog!" they said; "you may have Formosa instead." As England looked the other way, there was no alternative but to yield to the triple revolver pointed at her head. So Japan gave up her lawful prize and proceeded to occupy Formosa. Her troops found their deadliest enemy in the filth of the Chinese quarters of the large Formosan towns, and it was not long after the return of some of these troops in the autumn of '96 that Tokyo flamed out in an epidemic, smallpox dashed with plague. This was so severe that (out of 15,000 cases in three months) 65 per cent of the cases proved fatal,¹ "two were taken, the other was left"—the present writer being one of the minority.

It was Tokyo on the last day of January 1897. We had had a piebald month. During the first fortnight everything was abandoned to the festivities attendant on New Year: streets one long evergreen avenue of pine and bamboo (planted for "luck" and "long life" in

front of each house), crowded with cheery idlers and happy children fitting like human flower-beds in their radiant robes, ecstatic at the empire of ravishing toys that stretched before them, while overhead from every roof waved the scarlet disc on the national flag, and the roadway all day long was a giddy maze of jinrikishas flashing to and fro, laden with well-dressed heads of families bent on the orthodox visits of congratulation. Then came the sudden death of the Dowager-Empress; at one stroke the great city became a funeral show; the tens of thousands of flags were lowered half-mast, and in their place ten thousand long black streamers gloomily shivered in the Siberian breeze. Theatres were closed for fifteen days, at the university—*incredibile dictu*—lecture-rooms were empty for a week, public music ceased for fifty days, and in private houses until after the funeral, while the Diet voted £80,000 for the expenses of the imperial pageant.

It was a grim and frosty day without a break of sun, the kind of weather when foreign criticism of things Japanese is apt to be bitter, when the sloppy shuffling click of the *geta* (wooden clogs) becomes more exasperating than usual, and the smell from insanitary canals unbearable. I was lunching with some American friends at a pretty semi-

¹ Though vaccination in Japan is compulsory, repeated much more frequently than with us, and carried out entirely with Government glycerine-lymph from the calf, it is not very satisfactory in its results.

Japanese house three miles from the hotel where I lived beside the Sumida (the Tokyo Thames), but I left them rather abruptly and hurried home, because of a most uncomfortable brain.

I was soon in bed, where a raging headache kept me awake for a day and a half; then the doctor (there was only one English doctor — and he a Scotaman — in this city of 1,500,000 bodies) gave his verdict, "*hōsō*" (smallpox). Promptly, as if I were a live shell, measures were taken for my expulsion. Not far from the hotel was a four-roomed bungalow occupied by a Scottish lady and her young daughter: in a couple of hours these friends-in-need cleared out all their furniture, pictures, books, and divided the house into two isolated halves of two rooms each, locking the doors of communication and pasting over them on both sides sheets of stout paper from ceiling to floor.

Meanwhile, eager to utilise my last moments of sanity, a deputation of British residents had arrived at the bedside. A countrywoman of mine in Yokohama (eighteen miles away) had just been sentenced to death on the charge of poisoning her husband, and to save her life with due form it was required that three of her countrymen should be found, disinterested and reputable, to sign a petition to the British Minister, praying him to exercise the prerogative of mercy with which he was (until 1899) intrusted in those far-away longitudes: my double

qualification of new-comer and Government employee indicated me as a suitable signatory. The kind-hearted deputation read and re-read the petition, but I could not "get the hang of it," and when at last I saw some gleam of lucidity running through it, I still thought the condemned woman might wait, rather than I should have to sit up to sign. A few minutes' judicious coaxing, however, and I did the deed, after which subsiding, I ran away from reality for many days. Everything being now ready for my removal, four of the hotel "boys" came in, smiling as though it were a festival, and, passing ropes beneath the mattress, tied me up in a cylindrical bundle, and carried me out by a back-way down a steep ladder to the vacant bungalow: here I sat by a blazing stove, while they spread the blankets on the bed; I was unconscious before they lifted me in. . . . When I awoke it was midnight; the room was quite dark except for the flicker of a stove; sitting in front of it with their backs to me were two young women smoking curious metal pipes (this was allowed in every loathsome case), chattering confidentially with the gayest laughter. (They were excellent trained nurses, as I afterwards proved.) My head being still on the rack, I waited a minute to see if they would not look my way, then suddenly stepped out of bed and came behind their chairs, laying a hand on the shoulder of each to steady myself. "*Takusan hanashi!*" I sternly yelled in

crudest Japanese (for I had been only a few months in Japan), "*ikenai! hadzūkashii!*" ("Too much talk! I won't have it! disgraceful!") They dropped their pipes in dismay, scared by such a disturbance from a patient of 105°; the younger one burst into tears, and both appealed to me with torrents of their native tongue. As I had no idea what they said, I gripped the younger one and thrust her inside her sleeping-room, locked the door, knocked the other girl into her chair, and went back to bed. I heard sobs from the maiden in the dark, but she and I soon fell asleep. (Next day she prevailed on the doctor to let her go, for she was afraid of the violent foreigner; a tougher substitute took her place.)

The morrow broke miserably, and I got out of bed to reconnoitre. I stared at the roofs and sounds of a strange city: pulpy snow lay thick in the road, and a clammy wind was slopping round the corners. Some woman (in whom I did not recognise the nurse) was on her knees within the porch, busy with bucket and rag. She tried to lead me back to my bed, but I insisted on stationing myself at the open door, peering through the snowflakes, wondering what had come to the universe. I asked her—in English—why I was thus imprisoned in a dark hole, robbed of my clothes, left without food or cigarettes. She replied, in Japanese,—though the sounds seemed those of an inhuman land,—that his Majesty the Emperor had conceived a

plan for ascertaining the real merits of the various foreign employees in his service at that date. Each of those gentlemen when he awoke this morning would find himself in a part of the world he had never been in before, hopelessly cut off from any previous friend or means of influence; he would have lost any knowledge of the language which he might have acquired, and he would, moreover, be so disfigured by a revolting eruption on his skin that acquaintances would pass him by; while he would have to get on as best he could in the wintry air with a simple suit of pyjamas. His Imperial Majesty laid special stress on the pyjama regulation, as his object was to discover what we really were when stripped of adventitious prestige and suddenly reduced to our lowest terms. I replied that the August Design was school-boy nonsense—bricks without straw was nothing compared with it. "I don't know where I am," I said, "and if I speak to any one they only laugh." A coolie was passing at the moment, carrying milk for some foreigners' breakfast, and to illustrate my point I stepped out into the road and hailed him eagerly: he grinned from ear to ear, and with a shrug pursued the path of duty. "You might as well," I continued, "lead a lot of blind men inside a printing-office, and ask them to set up the morning paper!" The repellent female laid her hand on my arm and earnestly replied, "It is all right,—you all have the same chance; the best will find a

way out." Again she tried to draw me in under cover; but on gazing at my fingers it occurred to me that if I only showed myself long enough some one must notice such a hideous foreigner, and might tell other foreigners of my whereabouts. (I knew I was a "foreigner," but was unaware of "Englishmen" or "Japanese.") I would have gone out scouting in the streets, but there was something wrong with my legs which prevented my standing without support, so at last in utter disgust I brushed aside the expostulating wench, and marched back into bed, murmuring loudly at the severity of the test involved in his Imperial Majesty's experiment. She showed me a syphon of soda for reward, but neither hunger nor thirst entered my head; I had no notion I was ill—simply in a wretched predicament, powerless as a baby, yet served with a monstrous task.

I lay down, and for more than a month—though it was only half a day—I lost my way along a lovely part of the Pacific shore, where the landscape was honeycombed with surprises, events repugnant to all human experience, and so infinite in their variety that it made me ache to think of remembering them. Every bend in the path led without fail into a torture-trap, a mental torture-trap. . . . Now I was fast in one, snared for the rest of my life. I was on a huge turn-table, raised high above the fields, fenced all round its rim with tall wire-netting which forbade any chance of escape. It revolved with ponderous speed, humming like a

vast infernal top (the stove in the room had begun to "draw"), but presently it slackened speed, and with most measured cruelty showed signs of coming to rest. With maddening deliberation it finally stood poised for one second motionless; in that bare pause a small area of the wire enclosure at a certain spot leapt back like a valve; through that orifice darted out three men whom I had not before noticed as being with me, and before I could gasp the door had shut, leaving no hint of its locality, the massive platform was again gliding round with an ever-accelerating speed, and myself alone marooned in an unknown maze. I could hear the three liberated men shouting to me that it was Perpetual Motion, and, save for the periodic momentary pause, the turntable would revolve for ever; my only chance was to "spot" the opening door and fly headlong through the instant I detected it; that as at each fresh pause the opening would appear at some new point on the circumference, it were best to stand near the centre and keep a sharp look-out in every direction simultaneously. I was dizzy before, and these instructions made me mad—though I accepted the problem as a matter of course. . . . Another variation. The wire-fence had become a smooth circumference of solid steel, seamless, with no suspicion of an outlet anywhere. Worse still, I heard a child's cry of terror, and a young girl of eleven (it must have been the beautiful child of a Spanish secretary of Legation who lived

near by) rushed to me wild with alarm, appealing for help to get her out. Time after time the hollow dome—it was no longer open to the sky above—slackened and paused with its mocking invitation to alight; but time after time I failed to catch the aperture, dragging the child hither and thither in desperate rushes. Now the aperture each time was narrower than the last; I had to cease dragging the girl, and hurled her in front of me at the first sign of an opening: we were both panting and worn out, half-blinded and bruised by countless collisions against that impenetrable steel. It was about the thousandth slack, just as I felt my strength could not avail for more than one last demoniacal dash—when, close to where we stood, the smooth wall “gave” for the briefest wink of time; with a yell of triumph I shot her through with brutal force, heard her severed cry, and fell down breathless on the cursed rumbling floor, filled with an intoxication of relief. . . . The doomed rotating prison was stealthily shrinking its diameter; unless I soon escaped I must finally be crushed to pulp—and that in a terribly deliberate way—as the metallic mass contracted to a solid spindle core. I took out my watch and other hard substances from my pockets, for I dreaded to feel them slowly boring through my chest. . . . I wished I could take out my ribs as well, it would make the *finale* so much easier. . . . I grabbed at them with my fingers eagerly. . . .

A beautiful soft sun was certainly going to rise somewhere, and I lay on a bed in a world of nothing in particular. (I was conscious—or “dys-conscious”—mostly at dawn, and when the sun was setting through the room.) The shrill cry of an evil-omened bird vibrated in the air (the early “buzzer” of the Ishikawajima dockyard), and uncouth sounds disturbed my neighbourhood. Two repulsive females were harshly vociferating (the gentlest voices on this earth), and darting malicious eyes at me: they were eating a huge white root, which had the vilest smell (the Japanese *daikon*, a monster radish of garlic pungency). I loathed them on the spot, and an overwhelming desire for Escape surged in my brain; I tried to rise, but could not even sit upright—for of course those savage women had poisoned me while I slept. Then a Japanese man approached the bed; I instantly recognised him, with indignation, as a man of humble rank whom I had recently assisted with a loan (he was instructor to the student-interpreters at the British Legation, and Sir Ernest Satow had kindly lent him for a few days at the doctor’s request, to restrain my fancy for excursions to the street). I listened while this traitor and the women began to expatiate on the death by torture to which they would presently consign me. It appeared that foreigners were all to be got rid of; and they spent the whole of one sunny day explaining to me by the aid of

diagrams (they were reading and laughing over Tokyo illustrated papers) the many varieties of cruel death from which I should be allowed to select my own. Remembering the horrors of the Turn-table—which now seemed back in prehistoric times—I insisted on Death in the Open as opposed to Death between Walls. “Very well,” they cried, “you shall be taken up on the heights above Nikko, where Iyeyasu sent his favourite horse to graze till death, and it will be like this!”—on which they showed me the details of a previous case, a naked man tossed high in the air from one thorn-bush to another, next dragged at lightning speed through the slush of paddy-fields, thrown down a waterfall to clean himself, then tied to a kite and sent up nearly out of sight, to drop with a crash through the towering cryptomerias. “The air is so good up there,” they said, “that one needs a lot of killing!”

Then the male villain crept cautiously to my side, a glass of suspicious liquid in his hand, begged me to swallow it—and in return I hit the glass to smithereens across the room. The ill-favoured women raised a chorus of abuse, but the man only smiled a velvety smile, and came again with a spoonful of the cowardly fluid, which he put near my mouth, first pressing his other brawny arm (he was a noted fencer) against my prostrate form. I decided to have it, because it might possibly cut short the Open-

Air part of the business. Having swallowed it, I dug my nails into his arm, and asked him, “When does the performance begin?” He bent down with solemn face, took my watch from its hook, and pointing to the dial (he thought I wished to know when the next dose would be), said in a kindly earnest tone “*Háchi-ji ni!*” repeating it with more distinctness, “*ha-chi-ji-ni.*” I knew at once that he was saying “At eight o’clock”; but what language it was never occurred to me, though it was the first words I had understood since my long captivity began (the sounds were familiar, because he had lately given me lessons in Japanese). Anyhow, I was glad to think it would happen that very night. I turned to the syphon of soda always near my side (I knew it as an old friend, but not as “soda”), helped myself neatly to a full wine-glass, and lay down more or less content. Then I carefully wound up my watch—a watch that had looked on many glorious views—and felt some regret that I should never do it again. The sun began—as I remembered it had been doing every day of late—to fill the room with a pulsing tide of heavenly colour; enchanting tints spread in and out among the hill-ranges (the pattern of the paper on the walls), and I troubled not at all about the mercurial rumbling of the iron millstones (the poor old stove again) between which one of my legs was to be ground up fine before I went to execution. Lost in these archipelago-

goes of softly shifting rainbow hue (as the window-curtain lifted in the evening breeze) neither Present, Past, nor Future occupied my brain; I was a unit long detached from any echo of other existence; and the kindly Universe of comforting colour—crimson, gold, and glacier-green—swelled step by step to such bewitching splendour that I had to hold my breath. . . .

Dull prosaic dawn again, and the hideous peal of that hooting beast outside. Figures moved about the room, shapes without any relation to me. I got up, stood on the floor, and pushed through them as though they were shadows. There were four doors in the room, and on two of these I resolved to concentrate what strength I had: they were covered over every crack and keyhole with a metallic layer—probably aluminium steel; these, then, would lead to the Outside, where there must be sounds and sights, instead of that irresponsive blank which lay like lead in every cranny of my neighbourhood. I seized a poker from the stove, and laboured hard with calm methodic stroke to batter through the plating which sealed my doom: there was unlimited time, and it was only a matter of so many thousand blows to force a breach (it is true there were three windows more inviting, but they offered no provocation, for the visible world showed through). Though I struck hard and incessantly, a strange silence prevailed; once a gibbering female came and

gesticulated with insane dumb-show; a touch of the poker made her vanish into mist. . . . What a whole holiday! just two doors to smash, and no one to interfere. Whereupon I laid the poker down in a hollow where I could find it again, and walked back into bed.

Five more days—or æons—dawned and faded, filled with the same monotonous recital of torture to come. Each sunset I saw my three jailers smoking round the crackling stove, gloating on my imminent doom; each sunrise I lay and wondered how I could be still alive. I was tired of their minute and devilish procedure, for ever coming to try the edge of their knife on my tongue or chest (the clinical thermometer). During all this measureless time my eye was fascinated by one particular torture-stroke, which faced me each second of the day and night. Just over the door that confronted me a female figure (so I construed the graining of the wood) held a tiny steel cross-bow, aimed straight at my head with sleepless vigilance. The youngest girl took pains to explain to me (in reply to my repeated pointing) that from this bow, at the hour and minute decreed, the figure would let fly a minute chain-shot, two chilled-steel bullets linked by a fret-saw ribbon of toughened steel exactly the length of the space between the pupils of my eyes: thus each of the eyes would be destroyed, while the bridge of the nose would be severed by the band. She kindly thought

it would not be fatal, merely the opening chord of a Death symphony.

To distract my thoughts from this inhuman bow I made a game of my own, which soon drew all my strength into a frenzy with the fascination of its End. I would arrange all thinkable things in groups, until I reached the *summum genus* itself, that North Pole of attainment. Patience would be required—but how much nobler a game than Patience. I began with Bows; they were weapons or Arms; well, *women* had arms and weapons too—how about them? patience and skill will put them in their place. . . . Candidates for classification swarmed all day; the fields and hillsides showed them trooping in—what was one head against so vast a multitude? But a “racing” brain can accomplish any task by mere virtue of velocity, or at least leaps up at any hint of the Impossible. So, instead of sorting them out on the flat, I would get a better analytical view if I built them up like an Eiffel Tower of cards, taking great pains to be accurate with the foundations. After many hours of white-hot unremitting strain I was rapidly, with trembling fingers, closing in on the end of my Task, my blood boiling over with glee, when down at the very base of the edifice out walked a mutinous card, who said he had been ignorantly placed—and down came all my glorious work, flooring me as it fell.

And yet at random intervals (when the children of

some Anglo-Saxon missionary trooped past the open window) it flashed across the leaden solitude that there were certainly some “Englishmen” about who would come to the rescue if they knew: then the flash went out, like a revolving light at sea. But one morning, when the three fiends were more vociferous than usual (they were reading the first announcement of a Change to Gold Standard in Japan), I arose from my bed, and determined to make a bid for outside aid. Going to a coat that hung upon the wall, I opened a card-case, found a pencil, and neatly wrote an appeal to a young secretary of the American Legation—choosing him because of his height and athletic build. I gave him a clue to my whereabouts by telling him to “take a bee-line from” another landmark towards a certain “ruined house,” whence a few yards to the left would bring him to my cave. Pleased with my strategy, I went to the window and launched this missive on the Outside, assured that it could not miscarry. After which, I forgot all about the man, or the prospect of help. [A fortnight later my nurses brought me a card, minutely covered with writing, which they found beneath the window-sill, and supposed some friend to have left for my consolation. It was correctly spelt, except in the closing line, “as quick as you can for God’s sake,” where a capital B stood instead of a G.]

. . . Another sunrise floated through the depths of this in-

sufferable cave. The two females, exulting in devilish glee, were unrolling before the traitorous Teacher my death-warrant, so long expected, now at last arrived (it was a Japanese letter just come by post, containing Chinese characters too hard for the women to read). At the sight of this decisive document, in an instant, like a Buddhist soul after many lives at length attaining Freedom, I knew that my time was come to burst through the iron web that had so long sealed me in from life. With easy inspiration I slipped into my *zori* (indoor sandals), took the key down from its nail, and in a trice unlocked the door. The Traitor flew at me; but with one hand I laid him on the floor, dashed through the door which led into the hall, and put the key in the lock of the outer door. Women and man closed in on me and cried aloud, tore at my garments, clung to my arms, but I smiled as I floored them again with a semicircular sweep . . . and sailed out along on the edge of the Tsukiji canal, every cell in my lungs and brain bounding with the triumph of Escape. Of course they followed me, but that was as they pleased. I was now in open air, the nightmare spell thrown off for ever, and Victory greeted me in every glint of the glorious sun. Feeling the frozen ground as little as though I trod on air—for "Release!" was the cry that went thrilling down the avenues of the expectant

atoms in my blood—I lounged with exultation to and fro, opening my arms to the splendid breeze (a bitter nor'-wester) that whistled Freedom as it blew: even the ships, inanimate things, that float on this boundless blue (I had turned to the Sumida, thronged with sail), even they are Free, gliding some one way, some another, just as they choose. But what are they compared with Me! Here I brought up against the glass porch of a large building where some grinning faces seemed familiar (the "boys" were cleaning the hotel windows before breakfast); I tapped imperiously on the glass, and they only grinned the more. Perhaps it was a spectral house, . . . and at that moment I caught sight of my own reflection in a window backed by shade. Astonished as a kitten first held up before a mirror, I gazed and stared with consuming interest. A frightful havoc glared at me, a loathsome, puffy, toad-like countenance, expression eaten out of it by a festering swamp of pulpy sores, some as large as a medal, lurid with fungus colouring, revolting in its filth. Putting up both hands to raise the blotchy bags that once were eyelids, I searched for some relics of the human soul divine; . . . a sphinx-like gleam of humour peered forth in response, a caretaker while the soul was away. And the hands themselves were a match to the face, fingers webbed apart by the pustules in between—the whole thing be-

neath the scorn of monkeys. In nowise saddened by the sight, I chuckled aloud. "No Englishman," I thought, "would ever listen to what I say in this condition, and I might be given in charge. I can come out again whenever I choose, and it may be prudent to lie low for a bit. Besides, how cold it is!" So, strutting full of free-will, I soberly turned,—my escort, I noticed, still clamouring by my side,—headed back towards a nice European bungalow that stood handy, got into a cosy Christian bed that awaited me, and lost remembrance of affairs. This was the early morning of the ninth day—as calendars count—of my infinite wanderings.

. . . It was very dark outside, but a cheerful stove lit up a room in which I lay, neutral as stellar space, no thoughts or emotions, hunger or thirst, apprehensions or memories, kindred or nationality. There was a short struggle at the door, and a white man entered, his face profusely red. Standing half-way between the door and me, spreading his legs to keep his equilibrium, he addressed me very earnestly, in words which I understood at once. "You are all right," he began, repeating the assurance many times; "don't you bother a bit! I'll see to everything for you; but promise you won't go out of doors again—there's Danger outside!" Seeing that he was a trusty friend (I had known him a month or two) I nodded serene assent, and wondered what would follow. He staggered around in the

firelight, left the room, the episode was wiped out, and unconcern resumed its reign. [He was a man of brilliant intellect, constantly overcome by drink, brave and unselfish, long in the service of the Government, two years later dead, exhausted by Formosan fever.] . . . There was another short interlude, of a great broad-shouldered man, in black, who approached the bedside with Authority, put a pellet in my mouth, held my hand while I swallowed it, moving his lips to spell out—as from a tape—the urgent message, "*You must not go out*"; then he too vanished as he came. As if any one wanted to go out, or stir a finger, or be interrupted in any way.

. . . The night was crisp with frost, and quivering stars filled Heaven above the dark Pacific, where ships of many lands moved to and fro on trails of light. But were they ships? were they not motionless? . . . It was the watch-fires on the field of Troy, that winter's night three thousand years ago,

"when in heaven the stars about the
moon
Look beautiful; when all the winds are
laid."

I knew I had heard of this before—now I saw the real thing. The ships of the Greeks lay silent on the midnight bay; dark groups of men stirred round the crackling fires; now and then messengers sped from tent to tent; a low hum of voices was the only sound: and what stars for audience! . . . The moon had risen; . . . did

ever such a moon look down on earth! (a Tokyo winter night is marvellously clear) and I lay in the tranquil air on a flat house-top by night, steeped in content, certain that nothing would ruffle such a scene: moonlight in every crevice, flooding the eye and ear, the taste and smell, bathing every pore as soft as silk, a self-sufficing world of comprehending Touch. Moonlight and house-top . . . on such a night as this, . . . where was it? . . . on such a night as this.

. . . Innermost shade, where not a sound crept in: a haven of calm from the outside storm, a retreat no traveller will disturb. Before, behind, for miles on either side, stretched a velvety floor of deepest pillowy moss, a sea of minutest greenest growth, softer than swansdown to the feet: not quite level, but rising with most sumptuous curves (the bedclothes) to swell in beautiful "rollers" of divinest turf across the middle distance. Distance! it was distance drawn out infinitely far; and down the shadowless aisles on every side the stillness was so deep that one heard the forest breathe. For it was a forest, when one raised the eye. Millions of mighty tree-trunks, noiseless as columns, soared in the silence out of sight, with neither beginning nor end: were they aerial trees? since they never reached the ground. Some hundred feet above the whispering turf each stately mammoth stem on its way to earth broke up into a thousand twisting ribbons of root, which streamed out horizontally and

weaved themselves in air a maze of majestic trellis overhead; on this the veterans were poised—scarred veterans of a prehistoric age. Yet the aerial trellis was not self-sustained; avenues, till now invisible, appeared, of twining creepers coiling round some hidden stem, and dropping straight to earth at careless intervals: these must support the towering growth above—but they must be of a magic fibre from another world, for they stand transparent to the view beyond. Endless room for wandering here, with never an obstacle around: no note of a single bird was heard, and always the hush of the forest above. . . . The mossy floor itself was tracked with a pattern of secluded paths, each tempting to journey down its own immeasurable route; and, when one noticed, on these paths were tiny cheerful dwarfs, busy at some undiscoverable task. Hour after hour they bustled to and fro, jesting with pantomimic human smile: no speck of noise was wafted from their ceaseless toil (they were my nurses, doing needlework), save that at each bare footfall on the cushioned moss there came a subterranean microscopic splash, as of moisture oozing in the depths; only in such a soundless forest could such drops of buried music catch the ear. . . . Far up between the topmost twigs the sunny heaven hovered blue and remote; now and then came an echo of the passing of a breeze beyond, a pulse too soft and kind to penetrate below: a

distant tide of life might fringe the outer coast somewhere, but here, in the vastness of this cool retreat, Quiet held sway without one flock of stir, and boundless reaches of Rest lay hushed in the clean delicious air. Who would not stay for ever in a wishless calm like this?

Some forty human hours had gone, when I opened my eyes and awoke—it seemed for the first time in my life. Bewitching sunlight sparkled in the room, and a new birth effervesced deep down—but very faint—in every feeble cell of my body. Through an open window fluttered ripples of glorious breeze, and from sounds of water splashing crisp against bows of ships I knew I was on the shore of some great inland sea—probably Lake Superior (the laden boats were being poled into the heart of the city, as the muddy tide curled along the canal outside). Each wavelet overflowed with life into my ear, and the sunlight was no less eloquent.

“Hullo, doctor!” I turned to a bulky figure by the bed; “can you tell me where this is?”

“Why, yes!” he answered—and *terra firma* radiated from that voice—“the same old Tsükiji, don’t you see? you’re getting on first-rate!”

“I know,” I said, “but what’s this on my hands?”

“Oh, that’s all right, that’s smallpox; that’ll soon be gone!”

I gave no heed to the import of his words, the sound

was so superb. It was a positive world of flesh and blood, a universe of sanity and health. Each moment made the picture more assured, as chairs and table, *tatami* (the rice-straw mats) and stove, appeared in their familiar pose: but then—the forest? . . . and the noiseless dwarfs? . . . the wonder faded as I dropped down plumb in a cloud of softest soundest sleep.

Next time I awoke it was a world of very dreary prose. Rain was sopping on the ground outside the open window, and the room was dull vacuity. Trying to rise, I found my body like a mould of pulp without a shred of fibre holding it together. A Japanese girl slid quickly to my side, and in the gentlest tones saluted me, “*Ohayo; o medetō gozaimasū!*” (“Good morning; I congratulate you!”) After a long gaze at this strange though familiar apparition, I came back to Japan, but with reluctant acquiescence. “*Nan-ji deska?*” (“What’s the time?”) I asked—and her face beamed at having a rational being instead of a devil to deal with. She took down my watch, and held it before my face: the tick of the second hand seemed most remarkable, so brisk and orderly, so different from anything of late. I put my head under the clothes, and lay still for an hour or two. As the day wore on she brought me a spoonful of liquid (ammonia was in it), which swept like a cleansing tide through every cranny. Then for the first time it occurred to me I had been ill, and

I should like to know how long. I could not think of this in Japanese, so I begged her, "*Jibiki wo dōzo*" ("Please get a dictionary"), and when the book arrived I floundered long before I built up my inquiry. At last I found that this was the eleventh day, and that for eleven days I had had no other food than soda-water. Nine days and nights of unrelaxing strain, peering incessantly through the gloom for some signal of Escape, and raging hard at work for every strung-up second of that time with a desperation no sane man can realise: a Charge of the Light Brigade for days on end without a breathing-space—until the Forest came. When fever is high the patient is lifted out of the ordinary medium of common sense, and the brain then "races" uncontrolled, performing in five minutes as many thousand revolutions of thought as would require the whole of a healthy day. No wonder legs and arms were like famine skeletons of Bombay. . . . It would never do to think, for thought might bring Feeling, and that would be fatal. The rigid windows of the room, the buildings staring in outside, and voices calling to and fro in different languages—they forced themselves against the brain like some huge examination-paper. Down under the sheets, and shut out their relentless bombardment of an unbefriended aching nebula!

At last, one morning—it was only next day—a spirit seemed to stir upon the face of the waters. A girl came to my

side with a glass of hot milk, real earthly dairy MILK, and from its fragrant steam arose a landscape of cattle on a thousand hills, cowslip scents of long ago, and memories of healthy cock-crow heard at dawn in schoolboy days. It seemed incredible that such delights were possible, as I toyed with the teaspoon, and sipped now and then ecstatic draughts of a drop or two. After ten minutes of this luxury I yielded up the glass, and fell asleep again.

That afternoon walked in a well-known figure, the American Bishop of Tokyo, with genial voice and twinkling humorous eye. He filled the room with laughter as he chaffed the Japanese nurses on their treatment, and they in turn—*more Japonico*—plied him with questions on every conceivable subject, pleased with the chance of meeting a distinguished foreigner who could talk as one of themselves. When he had gone away, promising to return to-morrow, the girls proceeded to expound his sayings, syllable by syllable, with the help of many a feminine "*né?*" ("You know?") and with bursts of delight if they detected gleams of apprehension on the part of their patient. Whatever might have been going on in Heaven that night, there was great joy in the hearts of two Japanese girls, nurses by profession, but women first and last.

Next day we woke early, and spent two happy hours contemplating the fact that hot milk would be due at 7 A.M.

Having sipped it down to the uttermost drop, nothing else was worth considering in comparison, and the hours went by in a colourless neutrality. At intervals they painted my face with borax and glycerine (for nothing was hid from the dictionary), a delicious operation performed with a touch of thistledown, and with a minute care befitting an ivory miniature.

On the fourteenth day we had a visit from an English clergyman, who lived three miles away at Shiba. He suggested letting my relations hear that I had been ill and was doing well; and until that moment the thought of "friends" or "relations" had never once arisen—for the afterglow of the Forest still held sway. When the doctor looked in to say good night he announced he would not be coming to-morrow, as he was suffering from a sharp attack of rheumatism (caught in my service). Next day, accordingly, being thrown on our own resources, one of the girls conceived the brilliant idea of *bifu-ti* as an extra diversion. This was successful beyond expectation, so much so that the patient himself, who had hitherto shown little initiative, suddenly ordered "*yaki-pan*" ("toast"), and had sense enough to add "*abura nashi ni*" ("without butter"). The day was thus one shameless bout of gluttony, with a Demand-curve soaring to the skies; and when the setting sun flushed the walls of the room with colour the glutton took

no heed of it, though not so many nights before he had worshipped at its shrine.

The doctor's illness proved to be serious, and for the next ten days we saw nothing of him. But reconstruction went on rapidly, and high jinks of a sort prevailed; for though the commissariat was limited to the supply of milk, beef-tea, and toast, nothing was laid down as to quantity, and a mean advantage was taken of this omission. It is the convalescent who appreciates the old saying, "They that be for us are more than they which be against us!" He has only to lie still, and the majority increases every hour, an unearned increment of life. While I composed the centrepiece my nurses, sitting on the floor one on each side of the bed, began a course of lessons in English, varied in turn by instruction of their patient in the *nuances* of the Japanese tongue. We soon achieved a telegraphic fluency in both the languages, with infinite laughter on their part. Myriads of inquiries were made about the inhabitants of my honourable country—not, strange to say, about the men, but entirely concerning the women: how could they bear the pain of such squeezed waists and pointed toes? and the babies, were they not frightened when their mothers spoke so loud? As to their wonderful dress, what a time it must take to put on and off so many kinds of garment! and how they must shiver at a winter evening party! I assured them no

man, even though he spoke Japanese perfectly, would ever be able to satisfy them on these inscrutable affairs. Then they were anxious to know why Japanese women had such a baby "bridge" to the nose, while the women of the West carried that organ in such high commanding fashion. I told them they must eat more meat and less of rice, and they nodded quick with a fervent "*naruhodo*" ("just so!") of assent. Thus we passed the rather weary hours; for the patient, though he enjoyed his food, could not yet walk or even stand for more than a second or two. But the Bishop looked in every day, sending winged words through the open window, and—never to be forgotten boon—leaving behind him a copy of the 'Mail.'

The twentieth day was a memorable one: there arrived by post the 'Daily Graphic' of 31st December 1896, with its summary of the events of the year. From early morning until sunset I devoured this thrilling narrative over and over again, till I could hardly stay in bed for excitement. The broadside of terrestrial news set me all on fire from stem to stern. "*Tasshá de gozaimasú, né?*" (Isn't he strong?") said the nurses many times, as they watched the reading hour upon hour; but their faces fell when they took the temperature next day, and found it down near danger point. They brought me, to beguile the time, a beautiful chart of my recent journey-

ings, executed in colours with the fastidious accuracy so dear to the caligraphic Japanese: there I traced, with quite impersonal concern, the surges of temperature—three days close to 106°—prior to the exit from the Cave, succeeded by the instant drop into the level calm of the Forest, and presently subsiding in a Fuji slope of milk-and-water impotence.

Towards the close of one tedious afternoon, for it had been raining sleet all day, a *betto* (groom) in livery splashed up to the door and handed in, with compliments and courtly messages, a beautiful basket-structure trailing with maiden-hair and bloom, his master's card attached by a white silk ribbon. The nurses, not to be outdone, charged him with a load of equally magniloquent response, conveying to his illustrious patron information as to the health of their English patient, now become more or less distinguished by reflected light. The *betto* and his empty jinrikisha went on their dripping way, while we three worshipped at this altar of flowers, whose fragrance quite transformed the bare sick-room. Then underneath a layer of fern we found dozens of oranges, the choicest of the many varieties native to Japan; and there was no more reading of the 'Mail' that night. This timely gift was from the son of Count Matsura, who had been a pupil of mine at home. His family were of old good friends to Englishmen, for in 1613 his ancestor welcomed to trade in Hirado (their island-fief near Nagasaki)

the pioneers sent by the East India Company to open intercourse with Japan—an experiment of only a poor ten years' duration.

I was awake as usual in the morning, when an earthquake came about a quarter to six, which lasted 128 seconds—an alarming space of time to be fearing the worst. My night-nurse was sweeping the room, and as soon as the floor began to heave she dropped her broom and flew outside. But though the instinct of ages took her out, something else quickly brought her back, and she stood beside the bed, holding my hand, trembling in every bone of her body, as she faced the music of rattling panes and banging shutters,—till the last vibration journeyed on, and left us with a sickly smile. It was highly comforting to hear just afterwards the Ishikawajima “hooter” throbbing out across the Tokyo air, assuring us that business would go on as usual notwithstanding the recent alarm.

After breakfast came the ‘Mail,’ with something more tonic than even oranges. The Government was on the point of introducing a bill to establish Gold Standard in Japan. As this was in my own line of trade, the announcement stirred me like a call to arms. I got out of bed, and determined that now my legs must make up their mind to be mobilised. The sunshine was playing upon the floor, and I managed an entire circumnavigation of the bed—to the ardent satisfaction of two alien women. The moral

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ozone derived from the erect attitude was so inspiring that the feat was repeated several times that day; and towards evening I actually sat by the blazing stove while they made a fresh bed, listening to its roar with the indifference of a baby—that rumbling terror which had scared me so three weeks before.

On the twenty-fifth day our long-lost doctor showed himself again. He had had a bad time, and looked very white, but expressed himself pleased with what had happened in his absence. The patient's skin was nearly firm, and no prospect of being seriously marked. The nurses were duly praised for their share in this result, and they responded with choice samples of their newly acquired skill in English idiom. One of the two, however, he declared to be quite worn out, and finding her temperature 104° (though laughing all the time), she was promptly muffled up and despatched in jinrikisha to her home—for the hospitals were crammed. It was nothing grave, and she was well again in a week.

And now the word was given that the prisoner had served his time: there was no reason why he should not see the world if he chose. He was not the least inclined, eager as he had been previously to burst his bounds. He preferred to stay in bed and watch his nurse at needlework, or practise writing *kana* (Japanese phonetic syllables) under her approving eye, or help her wash away the paper which had sealed the

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doors leading into the other half of the little bungalow. (The paint on one of those doors, by the way, was sadly dented here and there, as by repeated blows from some iron instrument.) Meanwhile our doctor had notified the grey-haired police sergeant who watched over the white community of Tsukiji that we were ready to receive his visit of ocular inspection, after which, in conformity with law, he would issue his certificate of liberty to roam at large. That evening came a letter from the advanced class of students at the university, full of congratulation on the favourable news which had reached their ears; "and yet," said the sympathetic writer, "we have all much fear that now in so weak state, and exceedingly alone in strange land many thousand mile from native country, you shall earnestly desire to leave Japan, for wish to see again your family. I, at least," he concluded, "shall be of such a mind if placed in a likely spot" (similarly situated). I sent him back a hasty note to assure him I should not feel lonely in a land of such kind letters.

Next morning, 3rd of March, the inspector sent us word he would come at noon to scrutinise the *corpus vile* (for the scrutiny was real) of the honourable foreigner. Accordingly, a little before twelve a hot bath was arranged in front of the crackling stove; a liberal dash of carbolic solution was infused, and in this I sat, while the nurse swilled me thoroughly to her heart's content. Soon after

the midday gun had boomed across the city in walked our visitor, with white gloves, polished sword, and a still more polished atmosphere of self-possession. The patient stood up in his bath, an ignominious dripping bag of bones, and the genial officer strolled round in a circular tour, kindliness mingled with punctilious gravity: as for the nurse, she was radiant in expatiating on her handiwork. The official declared me a first-class survival, and proceeded to depart; but I begged him to return in a few minutes, when we would have some lunch prepared, to refresh him after his labours. Hastily drying and dressing, while the girl went to get from the hotel what I prescribed, we soon spread a white tablecloth in one of the inner rooms; and when our friend came back, we three sat down together to a lavish meal. For the patient there was toast with parsnip and gravy, the nurse had a favourite dish of her own, but for *junsan san* (Mr Policeman) was displayed a savoury *bifū-tekū*, with onions, vegetables, and a dainty loaf of bread: he was invited to drink *bīru*, but, remarking it was somewhat strong, was advised by his compatriot to have *jinjabīru* instead. Three bottles of the latter were consumed, and the feast came to an end in hilarious decorum. We begged him to have another *bifū-tekū*, which he said he would gladly do, had he not unhappily swallowed his own lunch just before he called on us. So with many compliments, expressions of the honour received from dining

with a *sensei* (teacher), and best wishes for long life and prosperity, this capable servant of the Empire bowed himself out.

Beginning now to realise that it was "Japan" outside the house, I had a fancy to emerge and see what it was like. Putting on my boots—what cavernous things they felt!—and a long overcoat which had often watched the Southern Cross poised above phosphorescent seas at night, I staggered forth with crimson face and knock-kneed gait, an admirable study of a drunken man. But I was content with a few hundred yards; for the sunlight dazzled on road and canal, the massive flow of north-westerly air pressed hard with its keen Siberian edge, and the little children stopped, long-sleeved arms uplifted to the mouth, to fix their wondering black eyes upon the foreigner's strange face.

Next day came down a note from the Secretary of the Treasury, in which, after congratulations, he begged I would if possible attend a critical meeting to be held on the 14th, and speak in favour of the Gold Standard Bill. The Finance Minister (Count Matsukata) could not hear of any other foreigner who favoured the proposed change, and as all the English newspapers of the Treaty Ports were threatening dire catastrophe in case the bill should pass, he would welcome support from the only foreign professor of economics in Japan. I agreed to attend, if the doctor should not object: it appeared as a "lark"—after

my late rough-and-tumble adventures—to go and play off syllogisms on a crowd; and I asked him to let me know what positions I had to attack or defend. The wind being very harsh that day, I remained indoors and read up the subject in the columns of the 'Japan Mail,' one of the ablest newspapers on the surface of this globe. I had a cup of tea, real China tea, for the first time since my illness—and fervently blessed that heavenly land. Before sunset, a second note from my friend arrived, containing instructions as to what various Opposition speakers would maintain, which of these points I might tackle myself, and which I might leave to him. I went to bed assured that I was in impetuous, well-informed, capable Japan: but somehow the whole thing seemed a joke, a stage phenomenon. After the strain of many days, it was such child's-play to manipulate mere arguments and string them to the dialectic bow: the machine ran readily at a touch, like a well-cleaned bicycle.

Next morning sunshine filled the streets, and I sallied forth to see what I could do on the measured mile. It is a great experience, one's first landing in Japan; but much more wonderful to renew the sensation after an exhausting fever, when the whole picture floats in limpidly, outlines clean and colours clear, through a lens for the moment freed from blur of prejudice or spots of racial pride. There was little of the latter in me as I dragged my devious way through the

dappled streets, until I found myself once more in well-known Ginza—cosmopolitan, chattering, tree-lined Ginza¹—with its vivacious crowds, its aerial maze of telegraph-wires, and endless procession of tram-cars. As I drifted down the pavement, pausing to watch each group of children at play, an English couple espied me from the opposite side, and hurried across to greet me. They were soon to be married, and naturally thought I must feel lonely, condemned for a week or two yet to keep outside the houses of friends, and tramp the thoroughfares of a great city where one cannot even read the signboards over the shops or the names of the streets (since all is written in Chinese characters). They little knew how much in company I felt, plunged in this crowded theatre of life, with friendly faces passing in good-humoured stream, and babies cooing as they tossed on the backs of unselfish sisters—while not far away there came and went a contrasting scene of leaden skies devoid of hope, and an unintelligible world beneath. Still it was pleasant to hear an Englishwoman's voice again as we made our comments on the charming trifles of the shops. Then I groped my way back to the bungalow, to be welcomed by a sunny nurse and an appetising meal.

On the following day she and I parted—for nurses were in exorbitant demand, and the

doctor wanted her for some one else. Then indeed was a week of abject solitude, for though I had a "boy" from the hotel to bring my food and make the bed—a man of untiring cheerfulness, with a footfall light as a cat—yet women are women in Japan, and their absence leaves a blank. Perceiving this, the staid Kin San ("Mr Gold," a nickname) subtly placed on the breakfast-table a freshly opened pot of marmalade—aware of the truth that Progress depends on the timely suggestion of new wants. As I watched him clear the table afterwards, smiling at the result of his experiment, it was strange to reflect that only forty years before such intercourse with a foreigner would have cost him his good-tempered head. Strolling out after by the Kabukiza theatre, where a patient crowd was pouring in to see the curtain rise at half-past ten, a soldierly tall white man whirring past on his bicycle nearly fell off in astonishment as he pulled up violently to salute me. "Eh, Professor!" he cried, "but you've given us all the slip this time! and only a week or two back I was down for your leading-off bearer! But we're always at your service." He was once—in the distant days of thirty years ago, when Japan was quivering in its new upheaval—Inspector of the Escort to the British Legation, a post long since become a sinecure; and he now devoted his versatile genius to the study of

¹ Main thoroughfare to Shinbashi station (for Yokohama).

horseflesh suited to all capacities. It appeared that, shortly before I entered the Forest, the doctor returning from my bed one night had told him that probably next day the concern might come into the hands of the Official Receiver; and as regulations required burial within thirty hours the genial Inspector had promptly set to work and fixed all details with his usual smart forethought. We fraternised over this joke, both of us on the right side of it, enjoying the morning sun: then he whirled away, and I returned to 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' which Kin San brought me—given him (Tauchnitz) by a departing tourist—and was soon absorbed in the enchantment of a Wessex atmosphere.

But weary days go by, and at last it was Sunday, March 14. Three days before, in face of a vague but fiery Opposition, the bill had passed the Diet, and early next week it would proceed to be handled by the Upper House. Hence on this intervening Sunday (Sunday has long been a day of rest in Government offices and schools) the opponents had decided to make a vigorous appeal to the educated public of the capital. Luckily, the day though cold was dry, and I had permission to go. At two o'clock my jinrikisha-man, whom I had not seen for weeks, came round to the door with his vehicle, and prostrated himself in greeting. He had hardly hoped, he said,—with a weather-beaten smile,—to see his master again, for while I

had been confined to my honourable bed his three children had died of the same disease; therefore he rejoiced at the admirable strength of the foreign constitution: then, having tucked me in as carefully as if it were his own lost child, he bounded off through the streets so cheerily, that a passer-by would have thought he carried the lightest instead of the heaviest heart in the world. We soon arrived at the large building in the Kanda quarter, where the debate had already begun three hours ago—for Japanese are patient listeners. I was taken up into a gallery, from which each speaker addressed the gathering, and there I looked down on a moving sight of a thousand acute faces, with black hair and eager black eyes, all keenly thirsting for each other's argumentative blood, yet all at ease in an obvious atmosphere of sunny geniality which would be impossible in Europe. Most of the audience read English well, but not so many were at home with the spoken word; hence my friend the secretary was to act as interpreter. While I kept myself warm at a glowing *hibachi* (brazier) set beside me, he attended to the field of battle, now and then giving me the pith of what was said. At last a Bimetallic champion came with leaps and bounds towards the close of his harangue, depicting, in language as impassioned as though it were founded on fact (for the tracts of the League were scattered broadcast in Japan), the deplor-

able condition to which great England was reduced, in consequence of her refusal to "rehabilitate" the white metal; a land of workmen seeking work in vain, and masters who had lost all memory of profits: this had happened even in England—but never shall it come to pass in *Dai Nippon* (Great Japan). As he resumed his seat amid gladiatorial applause, the Financial Secretary led me forward to the edge of the gallery, and briefly introduced me to the audience. There was silence to the farthest corner of the hall at the sight of my beetroot face,—the face of the only white man in the room, and he as one risen from the dead. Then I had my first experience—an experience many times repeated in the next three years—of trying to impress a Far Eastern audience by a discourse doled out on the instalment system; for after delivering a sentence or two I must give place to my interpreter, who reproduced the fragment in his most emphatic Japanese. The last speaker had ended with a lurid sketch of the dwindling incomes of nearly every class in England, so, apologising for my unseemly personal appearance, which must not be held to reflect the pitiable aspect of my native land, I proceeded to unfold a catalogue of sights that would meet his honourable eye, and perhaps modify his distinguished opinion, were he to go and see that country for himself. Nearly every man, woman, and child in that country rode a bicycle—an expen-

sive British machine; the babies of the poor were carried not in arms but in a cosy "pram"; in summer the sands of the seashore were hidden by the crowds who came from every inland town to enjoy their annual "change of air"; on the skirts of every city and town was a fringe, growing rapidly wider every year, of handsome houses built by prosperous traders who despised their former residence; clubs of every description—and clubs mean superfluity—had recently swarmed across the land; pleasure-yachts, once so few and far between, were getting of late too common to count; newspapers, books, and magazines increased with a birth-rate many times greater than that of the population who bought them, until the railway bookstalls groaned beneath the load; deposits in the P. O. savings-bank had never swelled so rapidly as in the last decade, while debtors abroad owed England more than ever before; the working men kept beating their previous record for drink, and alcohol in England was not cheap like *saké* here, so that these poor men swallowed every year a value five or six times greater than the revenue of Japan; nor were they ever tired of smoking tobacco, on which they paid a duty of over 1000 per cent; even then they had money left to throw away on almost every horse-race run; shop-boys took their week in Rome or Switzerland; new theatres and hotels were overflowing as soon as built; never before was the

output of pictures so large per head as now, and never before did they sell at prices so extravagant—and so on *ad nauseam*, amid fervent ejaculations from the partisans of gold. But these things, good or bad, were not owing to the monetary system of the country; it was something much more sterling than gold or silver that made a country rich. The qualities required could not be introduced by any bill, nor imported with a Foreign Loan (which was rather on the *tapis* then), though they might be encouraged by every patriotic Japanese if he once perceived how essential they were—the *Yamato damashii*¹ most needed now—to the future glory of his country. This Gold Standard Bill, therefore, was no matter of life or death, which if carried would save Japan, or rejected ruin her (or the converse, as Treaty Port newspapers declared). But for all that it was a measure suggested by the same alert intelligence which had marked the Meiji Government since '68, a measure proposed from a shrewd appreciation of the currency state of the world just then, as well as with an eye to the imminence of the Revised Treaties; while it would be a reform which, by bringing Japan into line—financially—with the leading nations of the West, would facilitate her commercial intercourse in much the same way as if her merchants spoke English fluently. As regarded

the technicalities of the bill, few private citizens of any country were instructed on the subject of Money; the Japanese Government were fortunate in possessing experts on this question. Let not their minds be troubled by the dictum that throughout the world there was “an absolute consensus” of economic authority as to the inevitability of the Bimetallic system: there is a similar pious concord as regards the necessity of Peace. But statesmen must direct their procedure to meet the facts which face them at the moment; they have to steer their own country, the world will take care of itself. During twenty most arduous and dispiriting years Count Matsukata had stuck to his task, brought order out of chaos, and restored the financial credit of Japan; this last bill is the logical outcome of his antecedent labours. The speaker apologised for detaining them so long: no one could have been in Japan for even a few months without hoping that everything would turn out for her best advantage. Then he sat down with aching limbs, tingling with the novel sensation of having touched the pulses of an Asiatic people: he had never felt so much at home, with those eager nods of recognition, impetuous perception of each point, and attitude of grave decorum softened by the countless whiffs of smoke that rose throughout the room.

I had stood 80 minutes, 35 of

¹ This term (Spirit of Japan) had once a fine meaning, but of late years in Japan it had become identical with common music-hall chauvinism.

which were occupied by my own slow utterance and the rest by the animated periods of my partner: so I was glad to bow myself out from the piercing eyes of the hearty assembly. Several kindly partisans of either side accompanied me to the door, to say a few polite words while I waited for my jinrikisha-man, lost among the serried ranks of many hundred similar vehicles. Then he tucked me in again with feudal solicitude, and rushed off homeward at triumphant speed—while the insatiable debate leapt up again in our rear, and in front lay the peaceful panorama of Tokyo roofs and countless telegraph-wires, with far-away Fuji nobly poised in clear-cut indigo calm against a smokeless sunset sky. Back in my cosy little room, where a ruddy fire awaited me, and Kin San bringing most delicious food, it was indeed a golden-letter day to reflect upon: and later, when he had gone away to bed, and I had the bungalow to myself, I drew the blind to let the moonlight flood the floor—it was just one month ago that moonlight and myself were all there was in a vacant world.

In the morning a messenger arrived with a note of thanks from the Finance Minister, and this was followed by the unexpected entry of my two late nurses, each bearing beautiful dwarf plum-trees in amazing bloom: their fragrance filled the room with Spring indoors. In honour of the visit we ordered a big carnivorous feast; and though they protested they were far too much abashed to

sit down with a *sensei* clothed and in his right mind, yet we soon fell to at a hearty meal of beef-steak and fried potatoes, while they poured forth a voluble account of all that had happened since we met. Ten thousand had died in Tokyo during the last two months, but now the plague was stayed. Then they begged a "Gold Flake" cigarette from that clever tin (a taste acquired during weary nights with me), and insisted they must mend some socks before they went, to atone for their so unmannerly greediness. As I watched and listened to their overflowing energy, their faces lit up with pleasure as though they came fresh from a holiday jaunt, I could not help wondering at the merits of the bodily machine in Far Eastern lands, where the human fire burns cheerfully and with such warmth, though fed with a sustenance so mean that a pauper in the West would throw it away in scorn. They must be engineers who can get such horse-power out of "waste."

And so the astonishing days went by. The equinox had passed—the light grows longer gently in Japan—and the air began to be filled insensibly with soft stirrings of glorious things to come. What man would attempt to describe, to one who had never seen our earth, the advent of even an English spring, where the sun rides low above the fields, where lustre and radiance and vivid warmth are at best but half revealed? Then who that has seen and heard and felt the

Spring in Japan unfold, will degrade the memory by trying to put it into words? A convalescent at least, born in pale northern latitudes, turned out on his tottering legs in Japan at such a time, is only too glad to be still while this great orchestra of life awakes. He is almost overcome by the ordeal of renewed relations with such an eloquent External World, which from every point of the compass marches up in inexhaustible procession, bidding him welcome back again. The pageant there arrayed before each sense is too superb for a weakened soul to face; the far-travelled body is quite content to drift for hours along the sheltered paths between the time-worn trees of Uyeno park, beneath a white-cloud firmament of pink-flushed cherry bloom, where the slumbering babies nod like harebells on the backs of their sisters at play in the luminous shade. Stretched far and wide below our look-out ridge—historic Tōyeizan—lies the great Eastern capital, quiet as some vast village of another world, an unaccentuated grey expanse of multitudinous tiled roofs, clear in an atmosphere unstreaked by smoke; across this unresounding level of crowded city life temples and tufts of foliage rise to break the sober monotone; while up here on our breezy picnic bluff the sparkling April sun—the cheery sun which has seen the Tokugawa come and go—laps in among the tall stone lanterns with its scented warmth.

It was tropical June, and I had long returned to my quarters in the hotel. One morning a sharp crack made me sit up in bed just as dawn was spreading gold above the hills of Kadzusa. As I lay back again while the *diminuendo* of the earthquake died away, my eye was arrested by a commonplace detail overhead. The four corner standards of the bedstead were carried five or six feet up, to support a flat trellis of iron laths above my head, upon which the mosquito-net hung stretched. Joggled by the untimely shock, I recognised at once—the aerial Forest of months gone by. But how did I get there?

One scorching afternoon in mid-July I sat out on my cool verandah reading the 'Daily Graphic,' the deep blue bay of Yedo flecked with fishing-boats in front of me, when Kin San handed me an envelope from the white-haired dispenser of Tsukiji. It contained a long-due bill for medicine supplied: I glanced along the narrative till I stopped at an entry (on the day I walked out towards the Sumida) which contributed the missing link: "Feb. 9, morphia tabloids, 40 sen." So a fraction of tenpence had taken me there and back, into the shade of that Undergrowth, and out into the Light again.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of."

It is now five years since I paid that unpretentious bill, and many sights have met my eye since then. I have basked at 7 A.M. under a broiling um-

brella beneath the Eden loveliness of the Botanic Gardens in Saigon; I have toiled up Fuji in the silence of a full-moon August night, and watched the stupendous flush of dawn grow deepening red with expectation above the sleeping levels of the vast Pacific, till the sun rose dazzling from its golden bath to sparkle down a hundred miles of pine-fringed coast and headland reach below (is it not Mr Hearn who says, "The first sight of [or from] Fuji at dawn is not to be forgotten in this life or the next"?); entirely alone in the Indian summer of late October I have climbed for miles through the limitless blaze of crimson maple on the waterless tracks of deserted Nyohōzan, to emerge on the solitary top with its immemorial shrine, and look down on a soundless world—save for the "hush" of far-off waterfalls—where the countless ranges of hills, sunny and blue, lay quiet as folded sheep; for five unruffled days and nights I have steamed on an Indian Ocean wrapped in opal calm, the horizon dozing two or three miles away, where encompassing stately peaks of cloud stood all day poised like guardian

towers asleep, their silky detail mirrored white in the motionless depths below: these and a thousand unimagined scenes have come and gone; but the Forest has remained.

Yet the former sights were real—for tourists pay their passage-money to behold them too—while there never was such a Forest at all. (The doctor and I agree in this, though each with his own reservation as regards the sense of that remark.) The Authorities say I was never there: I was "not myself" at the time to go, nor was I "all there" if I went; besides which, how can any one be Nowhere? Yet, here in lawn-mown England, breathing a snug Laodicean air, I have only to shut my eyes: again I hear beneath the moss that microscopic ooze, the distant music of its subterranean plash, again I see the noiseless Dwarfs (they wrote to me the other day), the towering unstirred foliage overhead. "A permanent lesion!" say the Faculty, and perhaps they know no better. How charming is divine philosophy; but the Forest far excelled it in this isolated case.

ERNEST FOXWELL.

CYPRUS UNDER BRITISH RULE.

BY SIR R. HAMILTON LANG, K.C.M.G.

TWO hours' talk in Parliament on the 26th of May last was devoted to our little dependency of Cyprus, and on the whole the outcome was satisfactory. With the exception of a few incoherent remarks from an Irish member, all the speakers bore testimony to the good work which Mr Chamberlain has initiated in Cyprus—work which, as Mr Buxton aptly puts it, is "founded on true business principles."

It is now twenty-four years since Cyprus came under British rule, but Mr Chamberlain is the first Colonial Secretary who has had the qualities necessary to treat the question of Cyprus from a business point of view. His predecessors had all a laudable desire to advance the material interests of the island, but they did not possess the practical knowledge requisite to guide them. The Cypriotes may *now* be congratulated that they are under the direction of one who has not only the will but the talents necessary to do them good.

Mr Chamberlain early saw that the question of the storage of water was an important one for Cyprus, and he gave it his first thought. An island which can only count upon an average rainfall of 15 or 16 inches per annum evidently required to husband its water resources

and allow as little of them as possible to be lost in the sea. He proceeded tentatively, and up to the present has only spent £60,000 on storage works. I have no personal knowledge of the results of this experiment, but it is pleasant to hear from members who are in touch with Cyprus that it promises to be successful.

Mr Chamberlain next wisely judged that a harbour at Famagusta was desirable, as well as railway communication between the coast and the capital of the island. At present there is not a single harbour where steamers or ships can conveniently land their passengers and cargoes. Ships have to anchor from a quarter to half a mile from the shore, and the landings are in winter made more difficult by a heavy surf breaking over the shallow waters, which run out to a considerable distance. Frequently, for many days at a time, no communication with the shore is possible. At Famagusta a natural reef of rocks singularly facilitates the construction of a harbour capable of sheltering in deep water a large number of ships, and permitting them to land their cargoes conveniently at quays. A small inner harbour still exists, which was sufficient shelter for the sailing-ships of five centuries ago, but it is of course in-

sufficient for the tonnage of the present day. It will prove, however, a useful adjunct to the larger harbour now projected. The town of Famagusta, which in the sixteenth century of our era had a population of 80,000 inhabitants and over 300 churches, is to-day a vast ruin of masonry, surrounded by lofty fortifications and a moat. Many of its stones have been removed to build the neighbouring village of Varosia, but still what remains, exclusive of the walls, is probably sufficient to build houses for a population of 20,000 or 30,000 souls. The fortifications, composed of large cut stones, might suffice for all the above-water-mark walls of the new harbour as well as the warehouses necessary. These fortifications are of no value to-day as such, and for the health of the new town ought to disappear. Archaeologists have already expressed their alarm that such interesting relics of the past as these walls should be demolished. No one who knows the interest I take in the antiquities of Cyprus will suspect me of a spirit of vandalism, and I have no hesitation in saying that these fortifications, which are only of the sixteenth century of our era, are not worth preserving. On the contrary, their demolition and the removal of the stones which encumber the town may yield most interesting archaeological discoveries. All that is desirable is that a small staff of competent archaeologists should assist at the operation, carefully photograph-

ing the walls before they disappear, retaining any interesting inscriptions and statuary, and searching for any concealed objects of interest. The cost of such a mission would be small.

It is not astonishing that the practical mind of Mr Chamberlain easily perceived the advantages to result from the construction of a harbour at Famagusta, especially as its cost will only involve an outlay of from £150,000 to £200,000. No such harbour exists between Alexandria and Constantinople, and, with the facilities of bonded warehouses, Famagusta may become the emporium for British goods for all the Syrian coast. It was therefore gratifying to hear from the lips of the Colonial Secretary that the work of the harbour "will be almost immediately begun."

In regard to the railway from the coast to the capital of the island the same authority informed us that it has been "thought prudent to wait for a year or two until the harbour has been constructed." No very serious objection can be taken to that decision. It is less burdensome financially, and will diminish the strain upon the labour which such works involve, although in some measure the existence of a railway to the capital might facilitate the construction of the harbour, by the easy transport of wooden materials, supplies, and even of labourers and the *personnel*. The railway, it may be added, presents no engineering difficulties, and

as a narrow-gauge line is all that Cyprus requires, the cost will be moderate. It is not to our credit that after twenty-four years of occupation not a yard of railway-line exists in the island. Austria, understanding better its mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, went into the country with its narrow-gauge railway, and to-day that economical mode of communication has been extended in all directions.

One speaker in the debate of the 26th of May said he thought it "rather hard that Cyprus should be expected to pay 3 per cent interest" on the advances "for public works made under the Colonial Loans Bill," but Mr Chamberlain had no difficulty in replying that there was no hardship involved in making Cyprus pay the interest which is charged "to the greatest corporation" in England. He was right in saying that it was an "extremely low and reasonable rate," and on such conditions I feel sure that both the harbour and the railway will prove remunerative.

As little difficulty had Mr Chamberlain in correcting the hazy observations of some speakers in regard to the tribute, and in showing clearly that the negotiations carried on two years ago with the Sublime Porte had in view the relief of the British taxpayer. These negotiations concerned only the Turkish Loan of 1855 guaranteed by England and France. It is certainly regrettable that a country which

can borrow money freely at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent should continue to pay 4 per cent to the bondholders of 1855 whom she guarantees. Had the negotiations been successful,—and I hope they may be at some future time,—the British Treasury, by paying off these bondholders with money borrowed at even 3 per cent, would have economised from £30,000 to £40,000 a-year—an economy sufficient to render unnecessary in future the application to the British Parliament for grants in aid of Cyprus.

The Colonial Secretary made the satisfactory statement to the House that he "shall secure a regular weekly service between Cyprus and Egypt," and if possible by British steamers. This will be good news to all our countrymen in Cyprus, and prove a great facility to traders.

There is only one point in Mr Chamberlain's speech upon which I would venture to utter a dissenting note. I do so without any hesitation, because I know the Colonial Secretary to be far too open-minded to object to well-intentioned observations, and because these bear upon a subject which bristles with difficulties, and which, when in Cyprus, I had exceptional opportunities of studying. I refer to his remark, "A suggestion has been made for the creation of a bank in Cyprus—a 'land bank' it has been described in this House. I am not prepared, although I wish in every way to develop the island, to establish a Gov-

ernment bank for agricultural or other purposes. But we are prepared to give every encouragement we can for the establishment of such an institution. We have been negotiating with private individuals, and I think there is a probability that such an institution may be established."

The deliverance of agriculturists in Cyprus from the hands of their usurers is perhaps *the* most important question for the advancement of the material interests of the island. Lord Cromer, with his clear-sighted vision, realised this fact in connection with Egypt, and for the past seven years he has been persistently labouring to find a remedy. The evil is even greater in Cyprus than in Egypt, for the peasants in Cyprus are poorer, and the profits from agriculture are greatly less in a country dependent upon the rains of heaven, very parsimoniously granted, and not watered, as in Egypt, by a never-failing river. It is not the interest which he pays which ruins the Cyprian peasant, although *that* is never less than 12 per cent, and in most cases 18 to 24 per cent per annum. It is the unfair dealing to which he is subjected. The produce he gives to his "merchant," as he calls his usurer, is invariably short-measured, and the price he gets credited for it is always greatly below its value. Estimate that, in the most favourable circumstances, the short measure represents 5 per cent, and the short value 10 per cent,

and it will be found that the money-facilities of the peasant cost him from 27 to 43 per cent. In these circumstances he never gets out of debt, and all his profits go into the pockets of the usurer. Add to this that, as the peasant knows nothing of accounts, he is frequently defrauded by his wily horse-leech.

When I took the farm of Pila in Cyprus, some forty years ago, I found the majority of the peasants of the village over head and ears in debt. A peasant, Demetri, who owed his merchant £12, said to me, "Originally that debt was £1, value of a tree which my shepherd was accused of having burned. For three or four years I paid nothing, because I considered the debt unjust; but as he threatened to sell my bullocks, I have been paying for several years three times the original amount of my debt, and yet he says that I owe him £12. What do I know of accounts? I sign the bond he presents me, in order that he may not sell my bullocks." This peasant was a typical specimen of three-fourths of the peasants of Cyprus, and I fear his debt is typical of many in Cyprus. I advanced the money to clear off his debt, and did the same with all who cultivated my land, making them further advances as they required. The interest they paid me was 12 per cent; but I gave them honest measure, and credited them for their produce at the prices which I obtained for my own. They

all prospered, and when my lease of the farm expired, ten years after, I sold my peasant-debts for the sum at which they stood in my books. During two bad years of drought the villagers needed exceptional assistance; but in the good years which followed they paid it back, and when I ceased to have relations with them none owed me more than what their growing crops could largely cover. Every peasant cultivator in Cyprus can gain more than his livelihood in a course of five years—good and bad together—if he is honestly dealt with and pays only 12 per cent interest for his money facilities. But they need to be cared for as children, and the facilities given them must be in proportion to their needs. Left to themselves, they will borrow without thought, and burden themselves imprudently, especially to purchase more land.

But the peasant-cultivators are essentially honest. An intelligent Turkish governor in the 'Sixties, wishing to deliver the villagers from the abuses of the tithe-farmers, leased to each village its tithes for a sum representing the amount they had yielded on the average of the preceding five years. A difficulty, however, arose in the very first year. The necessities of the Treasury required payment of what the village owed before the produce could be sold profitably. Applied to, I found a remedy. The bank, which I directed, advanced on the "joint and several" guarantee of all the cultivators of each

village the sum necessary to pay the Treasury. It charged 12 per cent interest, and left the village free to sell its grain when most profitable and to whom it pleased. The system worked admirably for two years—to the convenience of the Treasury, who got its money when due, and to the profit of the villagers, who were not victimised by the extortions of the tax-collectors, and who sold their produce at the most profitable moment. The tax-collectors, however, resented being defrauded of their extortions, and when the governor was changed they induced his successor to abolish the system. The accounts were closed without leaving a single bad debt, and on an average the villagers had only paid interest for four months on each year's advance.

I have given these somewhat personal details to show that *what* the Cyprian agriculturists require is reasonable facilities at a just rate of interest, and especially facilities from a source which will not take advantage of their weakness and simplicity. To a creditor thus honestly dealing with them they will prove good debtors.

Mr Chamberlain said that it was no business of the Government to establish a "land bank," and in this I agree with him. He added that he had been negotiating with private individuals, and that there was a probability of establishing such a bank through their instrumentality. The probability is very uncertain. The Government of Cyprus gave the con-

cession of such a bank to a private individual, who endeavoured, without success, to sell his concession in London. Capitalists very wisely declined to purchase it, for the enterprise was too small to succeed. Lord Cromer has just found capitalists to create in Egypt an agricultural bank with a capital of £2,500,000, on the guarantee of about $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent by the Egyptian Government. But Egypt, with its annual exports of £16,000,000, presents a large enough field for such a bank. In the same proportions Cyprus, with its annual exportations of £400,000 (one-fortieth of Egypt), could only face a bank with a capital of £60,000 — too small a business to support expenses and leave a profit. Such was evidently the opinion of shrewd men of business in London, for a recent decree of the Government of Cyprus has declared the concession of an agricultural bank to have lapsed. I think it fortunate that the project was still-born. Either it would have made too liberal advances, and so have induced the Cyprian peasants to ruin themselves, or its volume of business would have been so limited that it could not cover expenses.

Is it, then, impossible to find a way to deliver the peasants from the usurers, who suck their life-blood? I do not think so. Cyprus is a small, and at present poor, island, and must be treated as such. Its Government should be essentially a paternal one, undertaking what in a larger and richer community is done by individual enterprise.

Much money is not needed to satisfy the present requirements of its agriculturists. These facilities ought to be given judiciously—not with a view to bring large profits to the lender, but in order to leave profits in the hands of the cultivators, who, with them, will enlarge their operations. Profits left in the hands of farmers to add to the number of their bullocks and increase the area of their sowings are largely remunerative, and immediately tell upon the productiveness of the country.

I may astonish people in England, accustomed to large operations, and disappoint sanguine spirits in Cyprus, when I say that I believe all that is required at present to facilitate agriculturists will be covered by the sum of £100,000, and the best medium to grant these facilities is through the island Government. No other medium is as capable of acting towards the peasant-cultivators as a cautious parent—not gratifying their caprices, but limiting its help to their legitimate necessities. But it may be asked, "Has the island Government amongst its British functionaries the elements necessary to carry out this paternal treatment?" I have no hesitation in saying that it has. The administration and collection of tithes "in kind" was a most difficult and intricate operation. From all I hear, the British functionaries have succeeded in doing it admirably,—to the benefit of the Treasury and the content-

ment of the people. The knowledge thus gained by close touch with every individual cultivator and his resources is such as no agents of foreign capitalists can possess. Amongst the number of those functionaries many have an intimate knowledge of the customs and language of the country, and they are competent to control the native elements with which they must work. In these you have the safest and most reliable elements to grant all the money-facilities required by agriculturists.

And this is how I would proceed to use them. (1) Form an Agricultural Commission composed of five members, three being British functionaries (all knowing Greek) and two natives, with a small staff of subordinates for office work. (2) Provide the Commission with a capital of £100,000, upon which it can draw according to its necessities. This capital might safely and advantageously be provided under the "Colonial Loans Act," and pay an interest of 3 or 4 per cent. If the money could not *thus* be obtained, it might be possible to appropriate the accumulated balance of about £20,000 which is disposable from the Locust Fund, and to borrow the remainder as required. (A bank would, I think, readily lend the money to the island Treasury at 1 per cent above the Bank of England rate.) (3) For the first year make only advances—(a) for seed-corn and against growing crops, repayable within

a year; (b) for the purchase of bullocks, repayable in three yearly instalments. Interest payable on both classes of advances to be 8 or 9 per cent per annum. Such is, in very brief and general terms, the procedure I would suggest,—details as to securities, bonds, &c., may be easily filled in.

I am confident that the operations present a minimum of risk to the island Treasury, in whose Tithe Department accurate statistics exist of the crops of every individual cultivator. The facilities will prove a boon to the agriculturists in Cyprus, and certainly increase the productiveness of the island.

The truest remark in Mr Chamberlain's speech was, "It would be a great mistake for a great country not to let out its money for a certain time, and that is the only reason why these matters should be undertaken by the public and not by private individuals, who cannot lie out of their money." Nations as well as individuals must be prepared to sow if they wish to reap, and there is no truth which more strongly appeals to the British mind, for it has been the secret of our success as a prosperous nation.

Few people in England realise all the difficulties of our task in Cyprus. To administer a country with great natural resources is comparatively easy; to benefit a poor and small country, through costly and highly civilised instruments, is difficult. As few in England

realise the privations and hardships which their countrymen have had to support in their labours to master problems of which they had no previous experience, and that in a trying climate, with very modest remuneration. But an honest Briton, wherever he settles, leaves his mark behind, and in Cyprus his mark is one of which we may well be proud. Disinterested justice has been established where unblushing venality abounded. Honest administration has supplanted a corrupt *régime*. Financial order has taken the place of oppressive exactions. Liberty of the subject has dispelled the miasma of fanatical suspicion. Civilly, financially, and morally the position of the people has

been raised. Errors may have been committed unwittingly in the process of working out a new problem in unpropitious circumstances, but the intentions were always good and the motives pure. Now the perplexities of the initial stage are past. What has been accomplished is so much, and so good, that it is our interest and our duty to give the island administration our complete confidence, and to intrust it, more freely than in the past, with resources which we can easily spare, and which we may be assured will be employed to our credit as a nation, and to the wellbeing of an interesting people whose destinies have been intrusted to us.

WITH THE PEARLERS OF NORTH-WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

ON the north-western shores of Australia, between Cossack township and Port Darwin, lies a strip of coast-line which has not yet received much attention from the outside world. This is the pearling-grounds of the Nor'-West, and the lordly pioneers who rule there hope that their preserves may long continue to be neglected by the check-suited globe-trotter. The headquarters of the pearling industry is at Broome, the landing station of one of the Australian cable systems. Broome, when the fleet is in port, has a population of about 1500, which is made up of 200 white men, 800 Malays, 100 Japanese, and the same number of what are termed Manilamen, the remainder being a heterogeneous lot of aborigines, coolies, Kanakas, and specimens of almost every other race on earth. When the pearlers are out, however, the town is practically deserted.

Dampier was the first European to skirt this coast, but it was long after his advent that it became famous for its pearl-shell deposits, although, even before the great explorer's time, it was probably known to the aborigines, who until recently were in the habit of gathering for food the bivalves that the monsoon storms threw up on the beach. But since the days of Dampier many changes have occurred on these desolate shores, and it is even doubtful if the coast has the same con-

figuration now as it had then. While the Eastern States of Australia were still struggling for existence, the fierce Malay pirates reigned here, and indeed it is only lately that it has been freed from all suspicion in that respect, although the pirates may not always have been the Malays. The early sea-rovers were not long in finding out that it would pay them to give some attention to the treasures of the sea, and it is probably owing to their efforts that Roebuck Bay and the Ninety-Mile Beach came into prominence as pearling-grounds. From that time up to about twenty years ago these individuals worked the shores and shallows by various methods peculiar to themselves, the chief consisting of forcing the unfortunate aborigines to dive for the shells while they merely extracted the pearls.

This system ceased suddenly so far as the power of the Malays was concerned; for towards the end of the 'Seventies some colonial adventurers sailed up the coast from Fremantle, and although little is officially known as to what then transpired, pearling shortly afterwards became a recognised profession among our colonial cousins. Some of those pioneers are still engaged in the trade, and many strange stories are told of their doings before the light of civilisation, in the shape of telegraphic communication, was let in upon their coast.

At present, taken as they stand, the pearlers of the North-West are one of the wealthiest bodies of men in the world. They are certainly one of the most daring and most hospitable, and do not hesitate to share their wealth with any unlucky comrades. The methods in vogue now are much different from those employed twenty years ago. Beach-combing and enforced labour have given place to specially-designed luggers, profit-sharing systems, and the most modern diving-dresses, although among the South Pacific Islands beach-combing is still another name for piracy and slave-raiding. Strangely enough, the pearls do not now form the chief support of the industry. Nevertheless, some are frequently found worth £100 and upwards, and many of a value of £10, while from that sum downwards to 1s. for a thousand the pearls are very plentiful. The shell, however, is now the backbone of the industry. It is valued at from £100 to £180 per ton, and finds ready sale through Singapore agencies of London firms at anything between those prices.

The pearler of the present day is a Briton in every sense of the word, and takes great care to impress that fact upon all who visit his domain. He usually owns the lugger he commands, but in some cases he has only a share in it and its profits, the real owner being a speculative gentleman who resides in his schooner and pays only occasional visits to the various luggers under his flag. In some of these deputy-managed craft the only qualification

necessary to obtain the position of skipper or commander is that of being a white man and not a German; but when the master pearler goes to the British port of Singapore he is invariably forced to "come down a bit" and do his business with the prosperous and well-satisfied sons of the Fatherland.

Pearling is chiefly carried on in what are termed "proved grounds"; but if a good haul be made at any time, the pearler is not averse to prospecting for new grounds (waters). As a rule, the commander is the only white man on board the lugger; the crew is composed of Malays and coolies, but the diver is always an intelligent Manilaman or Filipino, who receives a small commission on the results of his work. The depth at which the shell is found is now about sixteen fathoms; of course shallower ledges are still worked, but it is considered that they are almost exhausted, and few pearlers waste time over them. In working, the diver is lowered over the gunwale by means of a winch, or in some cases dropped over unceremoniously by two of the Malay crew, and another two pump air down to him.

These people are always quarrelling among themselves, and consequently the diver runs many risks he does not at the time know of, unless he guesses what is happening above when he experiences the sensations attending the stoppage of his air-supply. He is accustomed to such trifles, however, and being more or less a fatalist, probably wonders what

the men at the pumps are quarrelling about, and in a disinterested sort of way speculates on which of his two pumpsmen will prove the weaker, and accordingly feed the sharks with him. Notwithstanding the uncertainty of life, he gathers all the shells within his limited range of vision, and when—if not too late—the men aloft stop fighting, he is hauled to the gunwale, where he is relieved of his spoil and dropped over again.

The shells are found in patches, and when one deposit is exhausted—or perhaps before, for the vessel is drifting all the time—the diver moves on to the next, crashing through dense forests of coral and other strange submarine growths *en route*, and frequently having to cut the fearful coiling creepers from his person. Often, too, he is precipitated into a deep dark chasm of unknown extent. In such moments the diver's sole idea is to preserve his balance, for he is really but a feather-weight in the water at the sixteen-fathom level, and in due time he is safely hauled across the gulf, when, if he has not retained a vertical position, or if his line has not been kept taut overhead, he is dragged head first through any vegetation or oozy slime that may lie in his path. When he regains his equilibrium, he once more turns his attention to the oyster-beds.

Meanwhile the lugger drifts erratically over the surface of the ocean: an evil-eyed Malay may be asleep by the tiller, and the white commander will likewise be serenely indifferent

to his surroundings, unless the thought strikes him that the quality of the last case of whisky he had was not in accordance with the labels on the bottles or the price he paid, in which event he will probably be making things lively among the crew, and the profits of the trip will increase in proportion. Every fifteen minutes or so the diver comes up for a "blow." If the shells are plentiful, he may send them up in a net between times; but as a rule there are a few yards separating the shells of any size, and it is not often that he cannot bring them all aloft with him. A "blow" to this individual means being suspended over the gunwale with his helmet unscrewed for such time as the lugger may take to sail to the next known patch, after which he is allowed to drop again.

When a full cargo of shell has been obtained the lugger's course is shaped towards Broome, where the molluscs are opened in sheds erected for the purpose. In the cases of the pearlery who possess several luggers a schooner is sent round periodically to collect the shell from the smaller craft, thus saving the latter a journey which they are ill able to accomplish, owing to their peculiar design and extremely small freeboard. The process of opening is sometimes carried on while the schooner sails for Broome; but as most of the pearler kings make their homes on board these vessels now, and do not care to suffer the attending unpleasantness, the system is fast dying out, and

the schooner in turn discharges at the Broome opening-sheds.

The methods of opening are many. In the early days the shells were torn apart with a knife or any other convenient weapon, and if no pearls rewarded a brief search the carcass of the oyster was scooped out and left to rot on the sand until a merciful monsoon tide caused its removal. Lately, however, the pearl-ers have copied the plan of the Chinese beachcombers of the archipelago, and a simpler system could not well be devised. The shells are laid on a slightly inclined bench, at the lowest edge of which is a carefully constructed ledge containing some water in the angle formed. After two days in this position the oyster "gapes" and "spits out" the pearl,—if any,—which of course rolls down the bench until it is caught in the angle, from where it is gathered by the attendant Japanese or coolies. The number of pearls obtained in this way is about thirty per cent greater than was formerly the case by the forcible method, and it is therefore evident that the hasty pearl-ers must have lost a considerable amount through their carelessness, and the incompleteness of their method of extraction. As said before, the pearls do not now form the chief part of the business; nevertheless there are usually about a thousand, worth an average of £1 each, in the shells discharged from one schooner. When the pearls have been collected the molluscs are cleaned out from the shells and either buried or otherwise destroyed, their late

casings being stored to await shipment. The chief opening establishments are owned by a London syndicate of jewellers, who employ in their service as many aborigines, coolies, and Japanese as may care to offer themselves. This syndicate is always willing to purchase "on chance" any shipment of shell that may come into port, and have a large fleet of their own luggers constantly on the waters during the season. As might be expected, this organised company is not liked by the independent pearl-ers, who, rightly or not, imagine that a monopoly of the trade is the real object in view. To such an extent is this rivalry carried that, notwithstanding the fact that Messrs S. & Co. have special facilities for shipping, and will pay full Singapore prices for all shells sold to them, the pearl-ers, unless temporarily financially embarrassed, will have nothing to do with them, and prefer to pay the expense of shipping their own shell to Singapore by some of the Holt Line of steamers, which call regularly in at Broome for that purpose, while *en route* from Fremantle to the great oriental metropolis.

During the monsoon season the pearling fleet shelters in Roebuck Bay, on the shores of which Broome stands, and then that wicked and evil-smelling township awakens up from its sleep; its drinking saloons are crowded with black, yellow, and white humanity; the joss-houses are filled with mad-dened nondescripts; and the far-seeing abilities and correct judgment of the man who

designed the prison to hold the entire population becomes apparent. Unfortunately there are some renegade whites who run gambling-hells, but in justice to Britons at large it should be stated that these men are mostly mongrel foreigners. The master pearlers, as a rule, do not frequent these places, preferring the narrower but healthier confines of their own vessels to that of the filthy mosquito-infested town; but if any do go ashore, they all meet in a saloon owned by a gentleman with a very Highland name and a dusky countenance, or in the cable house, where fortunes may be gambled away in a night. These men are indifferent to this matter: money, to most of them, has no attractions, and if they were denied the excitement of being alternately worth a fair fortune and without a sixpence in their possession, they would probably die of sheer ennui. But some of the pearlers, indeed the majority, are made of sterner stuff, they still retain memories of lands where green vegetation and flowing streams of crystal water take the place of hideous mangrove swamps and parching deserts, and their efforts are all made in the hope that some day the results will enable them to return to those lands. These men only come into Broome when in need of stores, and after landing their crews spend the "off" season in some of the numerous bays and inlets farther north, occasionally finding rich patches in those sheltered sounds capable of being worked at all seasons.

It matters little on this coast what the original temperament of any person may have been, the influence of his surroundings soon has its effect upon him and makes him like his fellows. With the pearlers this takes the form of a feeling of reckless indifference, and a stranger suddenly thrown among them sees much to interest and amuse him in the incongruities brought about by this state of affairs.

When I visited this quarter I was not aware that there was any special industry carried on. In fact, I did not even know that a township existed between Roebourne and Derby until one evening the *s.s.* *Nemesis* sailed into Roebuck Bay, and the skipper calmly announced that I would require to go ashore and await the next steamer, as he was going no farther. I was booked to London *via* Singapore, but I had expected to be dumped ashore somewhere, as the *Nemesis* was not the regular connecting steamer, and I had taken it chiefly with the desire to get away from plague-stricken Fremantle, to which city I had come round from Northern Queensland.

"All right, captain," I said; "but you might give me my bearings first."

"Go straight ahead from the jetty until you see the cable station, then starboard hard and you are into Roderick's Hotel. Drinks don't cost more than a shilling there."

"Thanks; but what is the name of the port? I presume we are still in Australia?"

"We are; this is Broome, the

headquarters of the pearling fleet, and the hottest hole on earth."

"Oh, I think I'll survive till the Australind comes along," I said as indifferently as I could, and after seeing my baggage on shore I followed out the captain's directions, and finally entered a well-lit saloon, in which the strains of a gramophone were evidently causing much appreciation. No one seemed to notice me as I made my way forward; all the occupants were clustered round the gramophone and indulging in various comments as to the correctness of the song it was giving forth. There were about ten men in the party, all of whom were white. Some were garbed in the most approved London club-land fashion, while others were very scantily clad indeed; but the careless manner in which handfuls of sovereigns were occasionally flung down on the counter showed that money at least was not much of a consideration with any of them.

"Hallo! boys; here's a stranger," suddenly cried one, seeing me looking on interestedly, and instantly a general move was made in my direction.

"Name it, boss," spoke the bar-tender, coming forward; "that is, if you is not an S——'s man."

"What will happen if I am?" I inquired, slightly curious to know what an S——'s man was.

"You'll get fired; that's all——"

"Shut up, Bob," reproved a tall broad-shouldered man.

"This is the master pearlers' club," he continued, addressing me, "and as a stranger you are very welcome to whatever it affords."

"Thank you, but I understood that this was Roderick's Hotel?"

"Same thing," laughed several of the men. "Who sent you here?"

"Captain Lawrence of the Nemesis."

"Then it's all O.K. He is one of us," said the first speaker. "You will be my guest to-night, after which we will consider what is best to do with you."

"Gently there: I am a Britisher, and quite able to look after myself."

"You can bet, my boy, that we're all coloured red here, but of course if you don't wish——"

"You are needing a spell south, Wilcox," interrupted another gentleman. "You don't give the stranger half a chance. We are pearlers," he continued, turning to me. "This is the off season, and as hell is let loose in this town when the fleet is at home, we arrange to look after any white stranger that may be cast upon these shores. Listen! There's the Malays' infernal racket starting now. I shouldn't wonder but they will have a fight with the aborigines before morning."

"I see I have made a mistake, then, gentlemen," I said, "in coming here, but I assure you that it was not from choice I came."

"Oh, don't let that trouble you. We are very glad to have

you. But you can now understand why we reserve this hotel for our own use. We don't all necessarily make beasts of ourselves although you see us here. Some of us, it is true, have a failing that way, and there are others over in the cable shanty now going it pretty stiff: we therefore make it a point that a dozen of us come here every night to look after any of the boys who may take more stagger juice aboard than they can carry; but allow me to introduce the company: This is Alf Chambers. Here is Sam Wilcox—Moore—Macpherson—Edward Wilson, commonly known as Dandy Dick,—Will Biddles—Gordon, of G. B. diving-dress fame,—and, the finest gentleman on the Australian coast, Gentleman James —”

“What about yourself, Cap.?” spoke the last named, waving his hand deprecatingly at the compliment.

“Me? Oh! I forgot. I am Biddles. You may have heard of me down in Perth?”

“I believe I have,” I answered. “You are the man whom the American skipper mistook for a pirate, and who, up in King Sound——”

“I see you have my history all right, lad; but there goes the dinner-gong, so come along and sample Broome fare.”

In the company of the light-hearted pearlers the time passed very quickly. It transpired that I had known in Queensland some of their comrades who had drifted down country from the Gulf pearling-grounds, and being well accustomed to meeting all sorts of people, I

readily grasped the little peculiarities of my hosts, and soon became on the best of terms with them all.

“I think we'll go now, boys,” said Wilcox, sometime about midnight. “You fellows that are sober can see after the other boys, and we two will get aboard the *Thetis*.”

“Why! Don't you stay here?” I cried.

“Not likely. There wouldn't be an ounce of blood left in us by morning. The mosquitoes here are A 1; but can you swim?”

“A little. Why?”

“Because I expect you will have to. You see we don't care to give the mob a chance of going aboard while we are on shore; so we never use our dinghys.”

“Oh! how about our clothes?”

“Leave them on the jetty. I always send the cook round for them in the morning.”

I did not answer; I recognised that I was again among a strange people. We were now threading our way among the coolies' huts and shanties towards the beach. The moon was shining brightly, thus enabling us to jump over several forms which were huddled up in various positions across our path without disturbing them.

“These people would stick a knife in a man for his bootlaces,” my companion remarked; “but luckily they are always too drunk to stand.”

“But if you treated them fairly might there not be better results?”

“Look here, my lad, you've still got some of the old country notions about you. You can't

treat the Malays as you do white men. They do not understand what gratitude means. Great Southern Cross! Don't you know the history of this coast? Haven't you heard of poor Woods? He was going to reform everything. Gave the beggars a share of the profits, and wages besides. First thing we knew was when his Chinese cook rushed into Roderick's one night and told some of us that Woods' crew had mutinied because of their tinned dog being off colour—as if it ever was anything else!”

“And what was the result?”

“Oh, they killed Woods and threw his body into the sea, and then sailed for Java. The cook jumped overboard and swam ashore, and that's how we knew. The Dutchmen chased them up and sent them back from Surabaya in chains, and we hung them.”

“These men were Malays?”

“Yes, but the half-castes and aborigines are just as bad. Take the case of Dr Vines, for instance: they murdered him because he couldn't give them what he hadn't got himself. And then there was Captain Skinner; but you'll not sleep if I tell you any more. Yonder is my craft. Get ready.”

Wilcox discarded his coat as he spoke and plunged into the inviting waters, and somewhat dubiously I followed; for although my garments were of the usual Siamese silk variety, and therefore did not greatly impede my movements, I could not help wondering what would happen if there were any sharks about. As I struggled after Wilcox this thought kept re-

curring to me in spite of all my attempts to convince myself that there could be no such creatures there, and just when I had almost succeeded in believing that such might somehow be the case, I suddenly remembered that I had been watching these very monsters playing around the *Nemesis* all that afternoon.

“What about sharks?” I gasped, as the stern light of the *Thetis* shone out ahead.

“They're too well fed here to trouble about white men,” came the reply, and I had to satisfy myself with the hope that the sharks would be able to distinguish without personal investigation that I was of the fortunate colour. We reached the schooner without mishap, however, and scrambled over its stern by means of a friendly rope, and soon after I was asleep in what might have been a comfortable berth but for the presence of some hundreds of other occupants of divers kinds.

Next morning I found my baggage and the clothes I had thrown off in the cabin beside me, and on going out on deck had my first view of Broome by daylight. It was not much to look at. There were some tents, two or three dozen “humpies” and “windbreaks,” and about twelve galvanised-iron structures, of which the jail, the cable station, Gummows' and Roderick's Hotels, were the most conspicuous. The *Nemesis* had sailed away south again during the night, and there was no sign of life anywhere. During the day—by way of a treat!—Wilcox and some others took me to inspect “their prison,”

in which they had evidently great pride; but I could not work up any enthusiasm over the sight of a score of miserable wretches chained together by the ankles.

"These are the murderers of old Smith," remarked one of my companions. "They turned on him because he plugged one of them with a '44,' one day when he was drunk, up in King Sound."

"We're keeping them here until we can get an executioner," added the jailer, "but it's spoiling the trade of the town; every one is afraid of getting drunk, as they might then be induced to take the job on."

I was glad when we left the place, and, eager to obtain information of a more pleasant kind, I asked to be shown the opening-sheds.

"Well, you *are* a strange fellow," was Wilcox's only comment as he led the way thither, and as we neared the shell-strewn benches I began to understand the meaning of his words, and signified that, after all, I thought I would rather not go farther.

"They do smell a bit strong," laughed my friend; "but we're not near enough yet, and the wind is not off the proper quarter to give a Broome appetiser. But there's Biddles semaphoring for us to dine with him in the club; let's get along."

Several days passed agreeably enough to me among those free-hearted Britons, but in time I began to calculate when the next steamer would be due. "I fear there's no steamer

coming into Broome for two months, my boy," said Captain Biddles when I asked him, and a visit to the cable station confirmed his fears; for when the obliging officials there wired to Fremantle, they received the reply that the s.s. *Australind* would miss Broome and call instead at Derby, on the head of King Sound.

"Then I will have to cross country to Derby," I said. "I suppose that is easy enough; the telegraph line runs all the way?"

"Oh, it's about as easy as going to heaven," answered Biddles. "The aborigines are very considerate between here and Derby,—they always kill you before they make a dinner out of you. But are you sure you can't stay here?"

"It is four years since I was north of the equator," I said, "and I have a strong desire to cross it as soon as possible."

"In that case, I suppose you will have to go. Wish I could myself."

"Why can't you? You are rich enough now, surely?"

"Ha, ha! Imagine old Biddles going back to civilisation. Why, man, they would — Well, well, never mind. Here's the boys coming. We'll see what can be done."

That evening I was informed that the *Bessie Fraser* was to sail north to King Sound in the morning with stores for George Hobart's schooners. I could go with it, and Hobart would find some means of landing me at Derby. This arrangement, the pearlers assured me, was not made in my behalf, as the *Bessie Fraser* would have to sail in

any case. Thus it came about that next morning I parted with my kindly friends, and in company with Harry Quin the skipper, six Malays for a crew, a Chinese cook, and a Manila-man diver, rounded the long sandy point and headed northwards.

After lunch the captain announced his intention of having a sleep if I didn't mind, and thinking that he would require to be on watch during the night, which would certainly be stormy, I said that I could easily pass the time looking round, and in an endeavour to do so, soon after entered into conversation with the cook.

"Is it going to be rough to-night, John?" I said by way of introduction, watching him as he went through some mysterious performances necessary for the preparation of our next meal.

"Velly. Me no need make breakfast. Captain sick. No want any."

"What! The captain sick! What do you mean?"

"Huh! Him no sail man. Him only gole' glabber; no know nothing 'bout sea. D——!" John disappeared as he gave vent to his last exclamation, and turning round I saw that Aguinili, the diver and *sarang*, was approaching.

"Good day, sir," he said in excellent English.

"Good day, Aguinili. You have given Ah Sing a fright."

"He gabble gabble all day when captain not well."

"Great Scott! What is wrong? The captain was all right half an hour ago."

"Yes, but we are round the

head now, and the monsoon is on. I come speak with you, for to-night I have only one man to steer with me, the rest no good. I come ask will you take helm for time to-night, else we must go back?"

I was certainly surprised at Aguinili's words, but grasping their import, I at once signified that I would willingly take a watch, and following him aft, I was made acquainted with the little peculiarities of the schooner in regards to her steering.

"Malay bad man—you no trust him," remarked Aguinili. "No let them know captain not well?"

"Never fear," I answered; "I have sailed with their kind before. But call me when you want me, for I cannot navigate by the stars as you do, so I must hunt up a chart and get out my own instruments."

At that moment Ah Sing came aft and informed me that the captain desired my presence, so, making my way to his stuffy cabin, I soon stood beside him. He was lying in his bunk reading, but as I entered he cast aside his book and said, "I say, mate, ye needn't give me away more than ye can help."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, so long as I lie on my back, but this darned motion doesn't agree with me in any other position."

"Do you mean to say——"

"That I is no sailor? You struck the bull first shot. I ain't. I is a gold miner, and got stranded in Broome after making a pile on the Marble Bar fields, an' losing it down in Roebourne. Lord knows how

I got here, but old Wilcox got me this billet with Hobart, 'cause I could swear at the nigs better than any man he knowed. I know nothing about navigation except what a bushman knows, and here I is at sea entirely."

"But have you never had any accidents?"

"Oh, there have been some narrow squeaks, but that chap Aguinili is a smart fellow; he manages somehow, and I swears at—— Lor! but I is bad. Oh!——"

"You'll be all right soon," I said, sympathisingly, as I left him. He was the best example of a bluffer I had ever come across, but he had the true grit of the sons of the Southern Cross, and if he knew nothing of navigation, he got along wonderfully well by leaving everything to fate and Aguinili.

It was a very rough night, but the Bessie Fraser weathered it all right, thanks to the skilful handling of the *sarang*. Next evening we entered King Sound, and by seven o'clock were safely moored alongside the schooner *Electron*, George Hobart's headquarters.

This gentleman was a very superior person to those usually met in such latitudes: he was of a scientific turn of mind, and had designed many strange appliances which were the wonder and admiration of the pearling fraternity.

"You have just arrived in time to witness the trial of my new dress," were almost his first words to me; and after dinner, in answer to my inquiry, he proceeded to explain wherein his dress differed from

others, and to point out its anticipated advantages. "Sixteen fathoms is the greatest depth at which we can work with the old dress, you know," he said, "and even at that a diver can only last out three seasons."

"Well, what's the odds?" interrupted Quin; "they're cheap, ain't they? and there's any amount where they come from?"

"That may be; but this dress is designed to give the diver a longer lease of life, and also to enable him to stand a good two or three fathoms more pressure. I have just got down a new G.B. dress from Singapore, and I intend to try mine alongside it to-morrow."

I did not then know what a G.B. dress was, but not wishing to display my ignorance I did not inquire, and during the evening's conversation I gathered that it was the invention of two Glasgow engineers, who had designed it to allow of greater depths being explored.

In the morning all hands began to prepare for the trials, and after breakfast Aguinili, as the most experienced diver, was lowered from the derriek in the G.B. dress, and Jim Mackenzie, the *Electron's* chief officer, was also weighted and dropped over in Hobart's.

"Isn't there a nigger handy to go down in the old dress now?" asked Quin, kicking over a helmet. "I'll go two to one on it yet."

"The water is too deep here," answered Hobart. "No man could bottom in the old dress."

"I'll go," said the intrepid Quin, "and chance it."

"No. Hallo! Mackenzie is down. Great heavens! The pumps are not working!" Hobart sprang to the pumps, and threw the two Malay operators across the deck, then, assisted by Quin and myself, began pumping furiously. It was useless. The pumps were not drawing air. The perspiration burst out over my face as I realised the position that poor Mackenzie was in. Quin swore, and then rushed to the winch, where the crew, in answer to Hobart's signal, were already hauling in. In less time than it takes to tell the diver was above the surface, and in another second his helmet was unscrewed.

"Poor old Mac," said Quin, as the limp form was removed from its cage; "I always reckoned that he would peg out before me."

"Wrong again, Quin," feebly murmured Mackenzie. "You won't be mate of the Electron this trip—— But I say, there's shells down there as big as a table, and they are packed like peas."

"Never mind them at present, Mac," spoke Hobart. "We're glad to see you all right again; but what happened? Did the dress——?"

"The dress is all right, but the beggars must have stopped pumping while I was sinking, and when they started again I fancy the check-valve would not work."

"Ah, then we burst the connection on deck when we rushed to the pumps. That means my

dress won't do for twenty fathoms at any rate. Hallo! there's Aguinili's signal. Haul away! Why! it is shell, and look at the size!"

In answer to the diver's signal the men had hauled up his shell-net, and when it appeared above the waters the size of the shells had drawn forth an exclamation of surprise from all. Soon after Aguinili himself came up laden with the spoil of the nineteen-fathom ledge, and when he was brought on deck and his helmet removed he told a wonderful story of the wealth of the deep deposits, which hitherto no man had seen.

"Shell plenty. No need move away; fill net all time same place. Good shell for pearl, I know that, for I see sea-snake feed much. I go down again quick."

"No, no, Aguinili," cried Hobart, handing him a glass of spirits. "We have plenty of time for that. Have the shells been moving much?"

"No. Shells grow there. No currents; no monsoons; deep, deep coral bottom. No shell on sixteen-fathom bottom here."

"Well, gentlemen," finally said Hobart, "we have seen the result of the trials, and the G.B. comes out first. I will cable to Singapore to send down some more of them, and I will see that Gentleman James, Captain Biddles, and the others get to know of its good points. Who knows what fortunes we may now obtain from these deep neglected sounds."

Two hours afterwards the *Electron* was sailing down King Sound towards the Indian Ocean, and on my venturing to ask where we were bound for, Hobart informed me that he had received word from Derby that the bubonic plague had broken out afresh in Fremantle, and it was therefore obvious that the *Australind* would not now call at the northern port; for if she did so she would assuredly be quarantined at Singapore through not having been sufficient time at sea since leaving Australian waters.

"We are going to put you on board now," he added, "and Mackenzie is going up to Raffles¹ with you to see about the new dresses. Meanwhile the men are opening the shells from the deep level, and I hope that we will find a memento to give you of your visit to this coast."

Early in the afternoon a long hanging cloud of black smoke became visible away on the southern horizon, and knowing that it must be issuing from the funnels of the *Australind* or the Adelaide Steamship Co.'s trader *Albany*, we steered out to investigate, and, if need be, to intercept. It proved to be the former vessel, and in due course she answered our signal and hove to.

"Well, good-bye then, lad. I hope you will come back to this coast when you are tired of the old country," were Hobart's

parting words as Mackenzie and I clambered up the sides of the *Australind*.

"If you see a lugger cheap at Singapore you might buy it for me," cried Quin, throwing me a miner's gold-bag; "and, I say, you might send me the second part of the book you gave me to read when we were coming up through the monsoon on the *Bessie*. I am darned curious to know the wind up."

"And here's a pair of the deep shells, take care of them," cried Hobart, fastening a couple into the sling in which my baggage was being hoisted.

Three days after landing at Singapore I bought a small lugger for Quin, and sent back the balance of his money and a complete copy of the '*Pilgrim's Progress*' (which was the book requested) with Mackenzie, who also undertook to see about the lugger going south. Four days later, while tossing in the Bay of Bengal on the s.s. *Ballarat*, I began to rearrange my belongings so that they might be readily transferred to the connecting P. and O. mail steamer *Himalaya* at Colombo. In doing so I chanced to open my shells, and found therein two magnificent pearls, and a note which read: "Please accept one of the enclosed from me. The other is from Aguinili, who has asked me to offer it to you in kind remembrance."

¹ The Raffles Hotel, Singapore.

THE END OF THE TETHER.¹

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

V.

As soon as he had come up quite close he said, mouthing in a deep sullen growl,—

“What is it I hear, Whalley? Is it true that you are selling the *Fair Maid*?”

Captain Whalley, looking away, said the thing was done—money had been paid that morning; and the other expressed at once his approbation of such an extremely sensible proceeding. He had got out of his trap to stretch his legs, he said, on his way home to dinner. Sir Frederick looked well at the end of his time. Didn't he?

Captain Whalley could not say; had only noticed the carriage going past.

The Master-Attendant, plunging his hands into the pockets of an alpaca jacket inappropriately short for a man of his age and appearance, moved on. He strutted with a slight limp, and with his head reaching only to the shoulder of Captain Whalley, who walked easily, staring straight before him. They had been good comrades years ago, almost intimates. At the time when Whalley commanded the renowned *Condor*, Elliott had charge of the nearly as famous *Ringdove* for the same owners; and when the appointment of Master-Attendant was

created, Whalley would have been the only other serious candidate. But Captain Whalley, then in the prime of life, was resolved to serve no one but his own auspicious Fortune. Far away, tending his hot irons, he was glad to hear the other had been successful. There was a worldly suppleness in bluff Ned Elliott that would serve him well in that sort of official appointment. And they were so dissimilar at bottom that as they came slowly to the end of the avenue before the Cathedral, it had never come into his head that he might have been in that man's place—provided for life.

The sacred edifice, standing in solemn isolation amongst the converging avenues of enormous trees, as if to put grave thoughts of heaven into the hours of ease, presented a closed Gothic portal to the light and glory of the west. The glass of the rosace above the ogive glowed like fiery coal in the deep carvings of a wheel of stone. The two men faced about.

“I'll tell you what they ought to do next, Whalley,” growled Captain Elliott suddenly.

“Well?”

“They ought to send a real live lord out here when Sir Frederick's time is up. Eh?”

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Captain Whalley perfunctorily did not see why a lord of the right sort should not do as well as any one else. But this was not the other's point of view.

"No, no. Place runs itself. Nothing can stop it now. Good enough for a lord," he growled in short sentences. "Look at the changes in our own time. We need a lord now. They have got a lord in Bombay."

He dined once or twice every year at the Government House—a many-windowed, arcaded palace upon a hill laid out in roads and gardens. And lately he had been taking about a duke in his Master-Attendant's steam-launch to visit the harbour improvements. Before that he had "most obligingly" gone out in person to pick out a good berth for the ducal yacht. Afterwards he had an invitation to lunch on board. The duchess herself lunched with them. A big woman with a red face. Complexion quite sunburnt. He should think ruined. Very gracious manners. They were going on to Japan. . . .

He ejaculated these details for Captain Whalley's edification, pausing to blow out his cheeks as if with a pent-up sense of importance, and repeatedly protruding his thick lips till the blunt crimson end of his nose seemed to dip into the milk of his moustache. The place ran itself; it was fit for any lord; it gave no trouble except in its Marine department—in its Marine department he repeated twice, and after a heavy snort began to

relate how the other day her Majesty's Consul-General in French Cochinchina had cabled to him—in his official capacity—asking for a qualified man to be sent over to take charge of a Glasgow ship whose master had died in Saigon.

"I sent word of it to the officers' quarters in the Sailors' Home," he continued, while the limp in his gait seemed to grow more accentuated with the increasing irritation of his voice. "Place's full of them. Twice as many men as there are berths going in the local trade. All hungry for an easy job. Twice as many—and—What d'you think, Whalley? . . ."

He stopped short; his hands clenched and thrust deeply downwards, seemed ready to burst the pockets of his jacket. A slight sigh escaped Captain Whalley.

"Hey? You would think they would be falling over each other. Not a bit of it. Frightened to go home. Nice and warm out here to lie about a verandah waiting for a job. I sit and wait in my office. Nobody. What did they suppose? That I was going to sit there like a dummy with the Consul-General's cable before me? Not likely. So I looked up a list of them I keep by me and sent word for Hamilton—the worst loafer of them all—and just made him go. Threatened to instruct the steward of the Sailors' Home to have him turned out neck and crop. He did not think the berth was good enough—if—you—please. 'I've your little records by me,' said

I. 'You came ashore here eighteen months ago, and you haven't done six months' work since. You are in debt for your board now at the Home, and I suppose you reckon the Marine Office will pay in the end. Eh? So it shall; but if you don't take this chance, away you go to England, assisted passage, by the first homeward steamer that comes along. You are no better than a pauper. We don't want any white paupers here.' I scared him. But look at the trouble all this gave me."

"You would not have had any trouble," Captain Whalley said almost involuntarily, "if you had sent for me."

Captain Elliott was immensely amused; he shook with laughter as he walked. But suddenly he stopped laughing. A vague recollection had crossed his mind. Hadn't he heard it said at the time of the Travancore and Deccan smash that poor Whalley had been cleaned out completely. "Fellow's hard up, by heavens!" he thought; and at once he cast a sidelong upward glance at his companion. But Captain Whalley was smiling austere straight before him, with a carriage of the head inconceivable in a penniless man—and he became reassured. Impossible. Could not have lost everything. That ship had been only a hobby of his. And the reflection that a man who had confessed to receiving that very morning a presumably large sum of money was not likely to spring upon him a demand for a small loan put him entirely at his ease again.

There had come a long pause in their talk, however, and not knowing how to begin again, he growled out soberly, "We old fellows ought to take a rest now."

"The best thing for some of us would be to die at the oar," Captain Whalley said negligently.

"Come, now. Aren't you a bit tired by this time of the whole show?" muttered the other sullenly.

"Are you?"

Captain Elliott was. Infernally tired. He only hung on to his berth so long in order to get his pension on the highest scale before he went home. It would be no better than poverty, anyhow; still, it was the only thing between him and the workhouse. And he had a family. Three girls, as Whalley knew. He gave "Harry, old boy," to understand that these three girls were a source of the greatest anxiety and worry to him. Daily worry. Enough to drive a man distracted.

"Why? What have they been doing now?" asked Captain Whalley with a sort of amused absent-mindedness.

"Doing! Doing nothing. That's just it. Lawn-tennis and silly novels from morning to night. . . ."

If one of them at least had been a boy. But all three! And, as ill-luck would have it, there did not seem to be any decent young fellows left in the world. When he looked around in the club he saw only a lot of conceited popinjays too selfish to think of making a good woman happy. Extreme

indigence stared him in the face with all that crowd to keep at home. He had cherished the idea of building himself a little house in the country—in Surrey—to end his days in, but he was afraid it was out of the question, . . . and his staring eyes rolled upwards with such a pathetic anxiety that Captain Whalley charitably nodded down at him, restraining a sort of sickening desire to laugh.

"You must know what it is yourself, Harry. Girls are the very devil for worry and anxiety."

"Ay! But mine is doing well," Captain Whalley pronounced slowly, staring to the end of the avenue.

The Master-Attendant was glad to hear this. Uncommonly glad. He remembered her well. A pretty girl she was.

Captain Whalley, stepping out carelessly, assented as if in a dream.

"She was pretty."

The procession of carriages was breaking up. One after another they left the file to go off at a trot, animating the vast avenue with their scattered life and movement; but soon the aspect of dignified solitude returned and took possession of the straight wide road. A syce in white stood at the head of a Burmah pony harnessed to a varnished two-wheel cart; and the whole thing waiting by the curb seemed no bigger than a child's toy forgotten under the soaring trees. Captain Elliott waddled up to it and made as if to clamber in but refrained; keeping one hand resting easily on the shaft, he changed the

conversation from his pension, his daughters, and his poverty back again to the only other topic in the world—the Marine Office, the men and the ships of the port.

He proceeded to give instances of what was expected of him; and his thick voice drowned in the still air like the obstinate droning of an enormous bumble-bee. Captain Whalley did not know what was the force or the weakness that prevented him from saying good-night and walking away. It was as though he had been too tired to make the effort. How queer. More queer than any of Ned's instances. Or was it that overpowering sense of idleness alone that made him stand there and listen to these stories. Nothing very real had ever troubled Ned Elliott; and gradually he seemed to detect deep in, as if wrapped up in the gross wheezy rumble, something of the clear hearty voice of the young captain of the *Ringdove*. He wondered if he too had changed to the same extent; and it seemed to him that the voice had not changed so very much—that the man was the same. Not a bad fellow the pleasant, jolly Ned Elliott, friendly, well up to his business—and always a bit of a humbug. He remembered how he used to amuse his poor wife. She could read him like an open book. When the *Condor* and the *Ringdove* happened to be in port together, she would frequently ask him to bring Captain Elliott to dinner. They had not met often since those old days. Not once in

five years, perhaps. He regarded from under his white eyebrows this man he could not bring himself to take into his confidence at this juncture; and the other went on with his intimate outpourings, and as remote from his hearer as though he had been talking on a hill-top a mile away.

He was in a bit of a quandary now as to the steamer *Sofala*. Ultimately every hitch in the port came into his hands to undo. They would miss him when he was gone in another eighteen months, and most likely some retired naval officer had been pitchforked into the appointment—a man that would understand nothing and care less. That steamer was a coasting craft having a steady trade connection as far north as Tensasserim; but the trouble was she could get no captain to take her on her regular trip. Nobody would go in her. He really had no power, of course, to order a man to take a job. It was all very well to stretch a point on the demand of a consul-general, but . . .

"What's the matter with the ship?" Captain Whalley interrupted in measured tones.

"Nothing's the matter. Sound old steamer. Her owner has been in my office this afternoon tearing his hair."

"Is he a white man?" asked Whalley in an interested voice.

"He calls himself a white man," answered the Master-Attendant scornfully; "but if so, it's just skin-deep and no more. I told him that to his face too."

"But who is he, then?"

"He's the chief engineer of her. See *that*, Harry?"

"I see," Captain Whalley said thoughtfully. "The engineer. I see."

How the fellow came to be a shipowner at the same time was quite a tale. He came out third in a home ship nearly fifteen years ago, Captain Elliott remembered, and got paid off after a bad sort of row both with his skipper and his chief. Anyway, they seemed jolly glad to get rid of him at all costs. Clearly a mutinous sort of chap. Well, he remained out here, a perfect nuisance, everlastingly shipped and unshipped, unable to keep a berth very long; pretty nigh went through every engine-room afloat belonging to the colony. Then suddenly, "What do you think happened, Harry?"

Captain Whalley, who seemed lost in a mental effort as of doing a sum in his head, gave a slight start. He really couldn't imagine. The Master-Attendant's voice vibrated dully with hoarse emphasis, like a slack bass string. The man actually had the luck to win the second great prize in the Manilla lottery. All these engineers and officers of ships took tickets in that gamble. It seemed to be a perfect mania with them all.

Everybody expected now that he would take himself off home with his money, and go to the devil in his own way. Not at all. The *Sofala*, judged too small and not quite modern enough for the sort of trade she was in, could be got for a moderate price from her owners,

who had ordered a new steamer from Europe. He rushed in and bought her. This man had never given any signs of that sort of mental intoxication the mere fact of getting hold of a large sum of money may produce—not till he got a ship of his own; but then he went off his balance all at once: came bouncing into the Marine Office on some transfer business, with his hat hanging over his left eye and switching a little cane in his hand, and told each one of the clerks separately that “Nobody could put him out now. It was his turn. There was no one over him on earth, and there never would be either.” He swaggered and strutted between the desks, talking at the top of his voice, and trembling like a leaf all the while, so that the current business of the office was suspended for the time he was in there, and everybody in the big room stood open-mouthed looking at his antics. Afterwards he could be seen during the hottest hours of the day with his face as red as fire rushing along up and down the quays to look at his ship from different points of view: he seemed inclined to stop every stranger he came across just to let them know “that there would be no longer any one over him; he had bought a ship; nobody on earth could put him out of his engine-room now.”

Good bargain as she was, the price of the *Sofala* took up pretty near all the lottery-money. He had left himself no capital to work with. That did not matter so much, for

these were the halcyon days of steam coasting trade, before some of the home shipping firms had thought of establishing local fleets to feed their main lines. These, when once organised, took the biggest slices out of that cake, of course; and by-and-by a squad of confounded German tramps turned up east of Suez Canal and swept clean all the loose crumbs. They prowled on the cheap to and fro along the coast and between the islands, like a lot of sharks in the water ready to snap up anything you let drop. And then the high old times were over for good; for years the *Sofala* had made no more, he judged, than a fair living. Captain Elliott looked upon it as his duty to assist an English ship in every way to hold her own; and it stood to reason that if for want of a captain the *Sofala* began to miss her trips she would very soon lose her trade. There was the quandary. The man was too impracticable. “Too much of a beggar on horseback from the first,” he explained. “Seemed to grow worse as the time went on. In the last three years he had run through eleven skippers; he had tried every single man here, outside of the regular lines. I had warned him before that this would not do. And now, of course, no one will look at the *Sofala*. I had one or two men up at my office and talked to them; but, as they said to me, what was the good of taking the berth to lead a regular dog’s life for a month and then get the sack at the end of the first

trip. He told me it was all nonsense; there has been a plot hatching for years against him. And now it had come. All the horrid sailors in the port had conspired to bring him to his knees, because he was an engineer."

Captain Elliott emitted a throaty chuckle.

"And the fact is, that if he misses a couple more trips he need never trouble himself to start again. He won't find any cargo in his old trade. There's too much competition nowadays for people to keep their stuff lying about for a ship that does not turn up when she's expected. It's a bad look-out for him. He swears he will shut himself on board and starve to death in his cabin rather than sell her—even if he could find a buyer. And that's not likely in the least. Not even the Japs would give her insured value for her. It isn't like selling sailing-ships. Steamers *do* get out of date, besides getting old."

"He must have laid by a good bit of money though," observed Captain Whalley quietly.

The Harbour-master puffed out his purple cheeks to an amazing size.

"Not a stiver, Harry. Not—a—single sti-ver."

He waited; but as Captain Whalley, stroking his beard slowly, looked down on the ground without a word, he tapped him on the forearm, tiptoed, and said in a hoarse whisper—

"The Manilla lottery has been eating him up."

He frowned a little, nodding

in tiny affirmative jerks. They all were going in for it; a third of the wages paid to ships' officers ("in my port," he snorted) went to Manilla. It was a mania. That fellow Massy had been bitten by it like the rest of them from the first; but after winning once he seemed to have persuaded himself he had only to try again to get another big prize. He had taken dozens and scores of tickets for every drawing since. What with this vice and his ignorance of affairs, ever since he had improvidently bought that steamer he had been more or less short of money.

This, in Captain Elliott's opinion, gave an opening for a sensible sailor-man with a few pounds to step in and save that fool from the consequences of his folly. It was his craze to quarrel with his captains. He had had some really good men too, who would have been too glad to stay if he would only let them. But no. He seemed to think he was no owner unless he was kicking somebody out in the morning and having a row with the new man in the evening. What was wanted for him was a master with a couple of hundred or so to take an interest in the ship on proper conditions. You don't discharge a man for no fault, only because of the fun of telling him to pack up his traps and go ashore, when you know that in that case you are bound to buy back his share. On the other hand, a fellow with an interest in the ship is not likely to throw up his job in a huff about a

trifle. He had told Massy that. He had said: "'This won't do, Mr Massy. We are getting very sick of you here in the Marine Office. What you must do now is to try whether you could get a sailor to join you as partner. That seems to be the only way.' And that was sound advice, Harry."

Captain Whalley, leaning on his stick, was perfectly still all over, and his hand, arrested in the act of stroking, grasped his whole beard. And what did the fellow say to that?

The fellow had the audacity to fly out at the Master-Attendant. He had received the advice in a most impudent manner. "I didn't come here to be laughed at," he had shrieked. "I appeal to you as an Englishman and a ship-owner brought to the verge of ruin by an illegal conspiracy of your beggarly sailors, and all you condescend to do for me is to tell me to go and get a partner!" . . . The fellow had presumed to dance with rage all over the floor of the private office. Where was he going to get a partner? Was he being taken for a fool? Not a single one of that contemptible lot ashore at the "Home" had twopence in his pocket to bless himself with. The very native curs in the bazaar knew that much. . . . "And it's true enough, Harry," rumbled Captain Elliott judicially. "They are much more likely one and all to owe money to the Chinamen in Denham Road for the clothes on their back. 'Well,' said I, 'you make too much noise over

it for my taste, Mr Massy. Good morning.' He banged the door after him; he dared to bang my door, confound his cheek!"

The head of the Marine department was out of breath with indignation; then recollecting himself as it were, "I'll end by being late to dinner—yarning with you here . . . wife doesn't like it."

He clambered ponderously into the trap; leaned out sideways from his seat, and only then wondered wheezily what on earth Captain Whalley could have been doing with himself of late. They had had no sight of each other for years and years till the other day when he had seen him unexpectedly in the office. What on earth . . .

Captain Whalley seemed to be smiling to himself in his white beard.

"The earth is big," he said vaguely.

The other, as if to test the statement, stared all round from his driving-seat. The Esplanade was very quiet; only from afar, from very far, a long way from the harbour, across the stretches of grass, through the long ranges of trees, came faintly the toot—toot—toot of the electric car beginning to roll before the empty peristyle of the Public Library on its three-mile journey to the New Harbour Docks.

"Doesn't seem to be so much room on it," growled the Master-Attendant, "since these Germans came along shouldering us at every turn. It was not so in our time."

He fell into deep thought, breathing stertorously, as though he had been taking a nap open-eyed. Perhaps he too, on his side, had detected in the silent pilgrim-like figure, standing there by the wheel, like an arrested wayfarer, the buried lineaments of the features belonging to the young captain of the *Condor*. Good fellow—Harry Whalley—never very talkative. You never knew what he was up to—a bit too off-hand with people of consequence, and apt to take a wrong view of a fellow's actions. Fact was he had a too good opinion of himself. He would have liked to tell him to get in and drive him home to dinner. But one never knew. Wife would not like it.

"And it's funny to think,

Harry," he went on in a big, subdued drone, "that of all the people on it there seems only you and I left to remember this part of the world as it used to be . . ."

He was ready to indulge in the sweetness of a sentimental mood had it not struck him suddenly that Captain Whalley, unstimulating and without a word, seemed to be awaiting something—perhaps expecting . . . He gathered the reins at once and burst out in bluff hearty growls—

"Ha! My dear boy. The men we have known—the ships we've sailed—ay! and the things we've done . . ."

The pony reared—the syce skipped out of the way. Captain Whalley raised his arm.

"Good-bye."

VI.

The sun had set. And when, after drilling a deep hole with his stick, he moved from that spot the night was massing its army shadows under the trees. They filled the eastern ends of the avenues as if only waiting the signal for a general advance upon the open spaces of the world; they were gathering low between the deep stone-faced banks of the canal. The Malay prau, half-concealed under the arch of the bridge, had not altered its position a quarter of an inch. For a long time Captain Whalley stared down over the parapet, till at last the floating immobility of that beshrouded thing seemed to grow upon him into something inexplicable and alarm-

ing. The twilight abandoned the zenith; its reflected gleams left the world below, and the water of the canal seemed to turn into pitch. Captain Whalley crossed it.

The turning to the right, which was his way to his hotel, was only a very few steps farther. He stopped again (all the houses of the sea-front were shut up, the quayside was deserted, but for one or two figures of natives walking in the distance) and began to reckon the amount of his bill. So many days in the hotel at so many dollars a-day. To count the days he used his fingers: plunging one hand into his pocket, he jingled a few silver coins. All right

for three days more; and then, unless something turned up, he must break into the five hundred — Ivy's money — invested in her father. It seemed to him that the first meal coming out of that reserve would choke him—for certain. Reason was of no use. It was a matter of feeling. His feelings had never played him false.

He did not turn to the right. He walked on, as if there still had been a ship in the roadstead to which he could get himself pulled off in the evening. Far away, beyond the houses, on the slope of an indigo promontory closing the view of the quays, a livid tall chimney smoked quietly straight into the clear air. A Chinaman, curled up at the stern of one of the half-dozen sampans floating in a group off the end of the jetty, caught sight of a beckoning hand. He jumped up, rolled his pigtail round his head swiftly, tucked in two rapid movements his wide dark trousers high up his yellow thighs, and by a single, noiseless, finlike stir of the oars, sent the sampan sheering alongside the steps with the ease and precision of a swimming fish.

"*Sofala*," said Captain Whalley from above; and the Chinaman, a new emigrant probably, stared upwards with a tense attention as if waiting to see the queer word fall visibly from the white man's lips. "*Sofala*," Captain Whalley repeated; and suddenly his heart failed him. He paused. The shores, the islets, the high ground, the low points, were

dark: the horizon had grown sombre; and across the eastern sweep of the shore the white obelisk, marking the landing-place of the telegraph-cable, stood like a pale ghost on the beach before the dark spread of uneven roofs, intermingled with palms, of the native town. Captain Whalley began again.

"*Sofala*. Savee *So-fa-la*, John?"

This time the Chinaman made out that bizarre sound, and grunted his assent uncouthly, low down in his bare throat. With the first yellow twinkle of a star that appeared like the head of a pin stabbed deep into the smooth, pale, shimmering fabric of the sky, the edge of a keen chill seemed to cleave from above the warm air of the earth. At the moment of stepping into the sampan Captain Whalley shivered a little.

When on his return he landed on the quay again, Venus, like a choice jewel set low on the hem of the sky, cast a faint gold trail behind him upon the roadstead, as level as a floor made of one dark and polished stone. The lofty vaults of the avenues were black—all black overhead—and the porcelain globes on the lamp-posts resembled egg-shaped pearls, gigantic and luminous, displayed in a row whose farther end seemed to sink in the distance, down to the level of his knees. He put his hands behind his back. He would now consider calmly the discretion of it before saying the final word to - morrow. His feet

scrunched the gravel loudly—the discretion of it. It would have been easier to appraise had there been a workable alternative. The honesty of it was indubitable: he meant well by the fellow; and periodically his shadow leaped up intense by his side on the trunks of the trees, to lengthen itself, oblique and dim, far over the grass—repeating his stride.

The discretion of it. Was there a choice? He seemed already to have lost something of himself; to have given up to a hungry spectre something of his truth and dignity in order to live. But his life was necessary. Let poverty do its worst in exacting its toll of humiliation. It was certain that Ned Elliott had rendered him, without knowing it, a service for which it would have been impossible to ask. He hoped Ned would not think there had been something underhand in his action. He supposed that now when he heard of it he would understand—or perhaps he would only think Whalley an eccentric old fool. What would have been the good of telling him—any more than of blurt-ing the whole tale to that man Massy? Five hundred pounds ready to invest. Let him make the best of that. Let him wonder. You want a captain—I want a ship. That's enough. B-r-r-r-r. What a disagreeable impression that empty, dark, echoing steamer had made upon him. . . .

A laid-up steamer was a dead thing and no mistake; a sailing-ship somehow seems always ready to spring into life with

the breath of the incorruptible heaven; but a steamer, thought Captain Whalley, with her fires out, without the warm whiffs from below meeting you on her decks, without the hiss of steam, the clangs of iron in her breast—lies there as cold and still and pulseless as a corpse.

In the solitude of the avenue, all black above and lighted below, Captain Whalley, considering the discretion of his course, met, as it were incidentally, the thought of death. He pushed it aside with dislike and contempt. He almost laughed at it; and in the unquenchable vitality of his age only thought with a kind of exultation how little he needed to keep body and soul together. Not a bad investment for the poor woman this solid carcass of her father. And for the rest—in case of anything—the agreement should be clear: the whole five hundred to be paid back to her integrally within three months. Integrally. Every penny. He was not to lose any of her money whatever else had to go—a little dignity—some of his self-respect. He had never before allowed anybody to remain under any sort of false impression as to himself. Well, let that go—for her sake. After all, he had never *said* anything misleading—and Captain Whalley felt himself corrupt to the marrow of his bones. He laughed a little as with the intimate scorn of his worldly prudence. Clearly, with a fellow of that sort, and in the peculiar relation they were to stand to each other,

it would not have done to blurt out everything. He did not like the fellow. He did not like his spells of fawning loquacity and bursts of resentfulness. In the end—a poor devil. He would not have liked to stand in his shoes. Men were not evil, after all. He did not like his sleek hair, his queer way of standing at right angles, with his nose in the air, and glancing along his shoulder at you. No. On the whole, men were not bad—they were only silly or unhappy.

Captain Whalley had finished considering the discretion of that step—and there was the whole long night before him. In the full light his long beard would glisten like a silver breastplate covering his heart; in the spaces between the lamps his burly figure passed less distinct, loomed very big, wandering, and mysterious. No; there was not much real harm in men: and all the time a shadow marched with him, slanting on his left hand—which in the East is a presage of evil.

“Can you make out the clump of palms yet, Serang?” asked Captain Whalley from his chair.

“No, Tuan. By-and-by see.” The old Malay, in a blue dungaree suit, planted on his bony dark feet under the bridge awning, put his hands behind his back and stared ahead out of the innumerable wrinkles at the corners of his eyes.

Captain Whalley sat still, without lifting his head to

look for himself. Three years—thirty-six times. He had made these palms thirty-six times from the southward. They would come into view at the proper time. Thank God, the old ship made her courses and distances trip after trip as correct as clockwork. At last he murmured again—

“In sight yet?”

“Sun make a very great glare, Tuan.”

“Watch well, Serang.”

“Ya, Tuan.”

A white man had ascended the ladder from the deck noiselessly, and had listened quietly to this short colloquy. Then he stepped out on the bridge and began to walk from end to end, holding up the long cherry-wood stem of a pipe. His black hair lay plastered in long lanky wisps across the bald summit of his head; he had a furrowed brow, a yellow complexion, and a thick shapeless nose. A scanty growth of whisker did not conceal the contour of his jaw. His aspect was of brooding care; and sucking at a curved black mouthpiece, he presented such a heavy overhanging profile that even the Serang could not help reflecting sometimes upon the extreme unloveliness of some white men.

Captain Whalley seemed to brace himself up in his chair, but gave no recognition whatever to his presence. The other puffed jets of smoke; then suddenly—

“I could never understand that new mania of yours of having this Malay here for your shadow, partner.”

Captain Whalley got up

from the chair in all his imposing stature and walked across to the binnacle holding such an unswerving course that the other had to back away hurriedly, and remained as if intimidated, with the pipe trembling in his hand. "Walk over me now," he muttered in a sort of astounded and discomfited whisper. Then slowly and distinctly he said—

"I—am—not—dirt." And then added defiantly, "As you seem to think."

The Serang jerked out—

"See the palms now, Tuan."

Captain Whalley strode forward to the rail; but his eyes, instead of going straight to the point, with the assured keen glance of a sailor, wandered irresolutely in space, as though he, the discoverer of new routes, had lost his way upon this narrow sea.

Another white man, the mate, came up on the bridge. He was tall, young, robust, with a moustache like a cavalryman, and something malicious in the eye.

He took up a position beside the engineer. Captain Whalley, with his back to them, inquired—

"What's on the log?"

"Eighty-five," answered the mate quickly, and nudged the engineer with his elbow.

"Hard a-starboard," ordered Captain Whalley. His muscular hands seemed to squeeze the iron rail with an extraordinary force; his eyes glared with an enormous effort; he knitted his eyebrows, the perspiration fell from under his hat,—and in a faint voice he murmured, "Steady her, Serang—when she is on the proper bearing."

The silent Malay stepped back, waited a little, and lifted his arm warningly to the helmsman. The wheel revolved rapidly to meet the swing of the ship. Again the mate nudged the engineer. But Massy turned upon him.

"Mr Sterne," he said violently, "let me tell you—as a shipowner—that you are no better than a confounded fool."

VII.

Sterne went down smirking and apparently not at all disconcerted, but the engineer Massy remained on the bridge, moving about with uneasy self-assertion. Everybody on board was his inferior—everyone without exception. He paid their wages and found them in their food. They ate more of his bread and pocketed more of his money than they were worth; and they had no care in the world, while he alone had to meet all the difficulties of ship-

owning. When he contemplated his position in all its menacing entirety, it seemed to him that he had been for years the prey of a band of parasites; and for years he had scowled at everybody connected with the *Sofala* except, perhaps, at the Chinese firemen who served to get her along. Their use was manifest: they were an indispensable part of the machinery of which he was the master.

When he passed along his decks he shouldered those he

came across brutally ; but the Malay deck hands had learned to dodge out of his way. He had to bring himself to tolerate them because of the necessary manual labour of the ship which must be done. He had to struggle and plan and scheme to keep the *Sofala* afloat—and what did he get for it? Not even enough respect. They could not have given him enough of that if all their thoughts and all their actions had been directed to that end. The vanity of possession, the vainglory of power, had passed away by this time, and there remained only the material embarrassments, the fear of losing that position which had turned out not worth having, and an anxiety of thought which no abject subservience of men could repay.

He walked up and down. The bridge was his own after all. He had paid for it ; and with the stem of the pipe in his hand he would stop short at times as if to listen with a profound and concentrated attention to the deadened beat of the engines (his own engines) and the slight grinding of the steering chains upon the continuous low wash of water alongside. But for these sounds, the ship might have been lying as still as if moored to a bank, and as silent as if abandoned by every living soul ; only the coast, the low coast of mud and mangroves with the three palms in a bunch at the back, grew slowly more distinct in its long straight line, without a single feature to arrest attention. The native passengers of the *Sofala* lay

about on mats under the awnings ; the smoke of her funnel seemed the only sign of her life and connected with her gliding motion in a mysterious manner.

Captain Whalley on his feet, with a pair of binoculars in his hand and the little Malay Serang at his elbow, like an old giant attended by a wizened pigmy, was taking her over the shallow water of the bar.

This submarine ridge of mud, scoured by the stream out of the soft bottom of the river and heaped up far out on the hard bottom of the sea, was difficult to get over. The alluvial coast having no distinguishing marks, the bearings of the crossing-place had to be taken from the shape of the mountains inland. The guidance of a form flattened and uneven at the top like a grinder tooth, and of another smooth, saddle-backed summit, had to be searched for within the great unclouded glare that seemed to shift and float like a dry fiery mist, filling the air, ascending from the water, shrouding the distances, scorching to the eye. In this veil of light the near edge of the shore alone stood out almost coal-black with an opaque and motionless solidity. Thirty miles away the serrated range of the interior stretched across the horizon, its outlines and shades of blue, faint and tremulous like a background painted on airy gossamer on the quivering fabric of an impalpable curtain let down to the plain of alluvial soil. It was level like the floor of a hall under its carpet of forests, a carpet with a living

pile of sombre green leaves cut straight to the stippled band of glitter along the shore. And the openings of the estuary appeared, shining white, like bits of silver let into the square pieces snipped clean and sharp out of the opaque body of the land bordered with mangroves.

On the fore part of the bridge the giant and the pigmy muttered to each other frequently in quiet tones. Behind them Massy stood sideways with an expression of disdain and suspense on his face. His globular eyes were perfectly motionless, and he seemed to have forgotten the long pipe he held in his hand.

On the fore-deck below the bridge, steeply roofed with the white slopes of the awnings, a young lascar seaman had clambered outside the rail. He adjusted quickly a broad band of sail canvas under his armpits, and throwing his chest against it, leaned out far over the water. The sleeves of his thin cotton shirt, cut off close to the shoulder, bared his brown arm of full rounded form and with a satiny skin like a woman's. He swung it rigidly with the rotary and menacing action of a slinger: the 14lb. weight hurtled circling in the air, then suddenly flew ahead as far as the curve of the bow. The wet thin line swished like scratched silk running through the dark fingers of the man, and the plunge of the lead close to the ship's side made a vanishing silvery scar upon the golden glitter; then after an interval the voice of the young Malay uplifted and long-drawn de-

clared the depth of the water in his own language.

"Tiga stengah," he cried after each splash and pause, gathering the line busily for another cast. "Tiga stengah," which means three fathom and a half. For a mile or so from seaward there was a uniform depth of water right up to the bar. "Half-three. Half-three. Half-three,"—and his modulated cry, returned leisurely and monotonous, like the repeated call of a bird, seemed to float away in sunshine and disappear in the spacious silence of the empty sea and of a lifeless shore lying open, north and south, east and west, without the stir of a single cloud-shadow or the whisper of any other voice.

The owner-engineer of the *Sofala* remained very still behind the two seamen of different race, creed, and colour; the European with the time-defying vigour of his old frame, the little Malay, old too, but slight and shrunk like a withered brown leaf blown by a chance wind under the mighty shadow of the other. Very busy looking forward at the land, they had not a glance to spare; and Massy, glaring at them from behind, seemed to resent their attention to their duty like a personal slight upon himself.

This was unreasonable; but he had lived in his own world of unreasonable resentments for many years. At last, passing his moist palm over the rare lanky wisps of coarse hair on the top of his yellow head, he began to talk slowly.

"A leadsman, you want! I suppose that's your correct

mail-boat style. Haven't you enough judgment to tell where you are by looking at the land? Why, before I had been a twelve-month in the trade I was up to that trick—and I am only an engineer. I can point to you from here where the bar is, and I could tell you besides that you are as likely as not to stick her in the mud in about five minutes from now; only you would call it interfering, I suppose. And there's that written agreement of ours, that says I mustn't interfere."

His voice stopped. Captain Whalley, without relaxing the set severity of his features, moved his lips to ask in a quick mumble—

"How near, Serang?"

"Very near now, Tuan," the Malay muttered rapidly.

"Dead slow," said the Captain aloud in a firm tone.

The Serang snatched at the handle of the telegraph. A gong clanged down below. Massy with a scornful snigger walked off and put his head down the engine-room skylight.

"You may expect some rare fooling with the engines, Jack," he bellowed. The space into which he stared was deep and full of gloom; and the grey gleams of steel down there seemed cool after the intense glare of the sea around the ship. The air, however, came up clammy and hot on his face. A short hoot on which it would have been impossible to put any sort of interpretation came from the bottom cavernously. This was the way in which the second engineer answered his chief.

He was a middle-aged man with an inattentive manner, and apparently wrapped up in such a taciturn concern for his engines that he seemed to have lost the use of speech. When addressed directly his only answer would be a grunt or a hoot, according to the distance. For all the years he had been in the *Sofala* he had never been known to exchange as much as a frank Good morning with any of his shipmates. He did not seem aware that men came and went in the world; he did not seem to see them at all. Indeed he never recognised his shipmates on shore. At table (the four white men of the *Sofala* messed together) he sat looking into his plate dispassionately, but at the end of the meal would jump up and bolt down below as if a sudden thought had impelled him to rush and see whether somebody had not stolen the engines while he dined. In port at the end of the trip he went ashore regularly, but no one knew where he spent his evenings or in what manner. The local coasting fleet had preserved a wild and incoherent tale of his infatuation for the wife of a sergeant in an Irish infantry regiment. The regiment, however, had done its turn of garrison duty there ages before, and was gone somewhere to the other side of the earth, out of men's knowledge. Twice or perhaps three times in the course of the year he would take too much to drink. On these occasions he returned on board at an earlier hour than usual; ran across the deck

balancing himself with his spread arms like a tight-rope walker; and locking himself up in his cabin, he would converse and argue with himself the livelong night in an amazing variety of tones, storm, sneer, and whine with an inexhaustible persistence. Massy in his berth next door, raising himself on his elbow, would discover that his second had remembered the name of every white man that had passed through the *Sofala* for years and years back. He remembered the names of men that had died, that had gone home, that had gone to America: he remembered in his cups the names of men whose connection with the ship had been so short that Massy had almost forgotten its circumstances and could barely recall their faces. The inebriated voice on the outside of the bulkhead commented upon them all with an extraordinary and ingenious venom of abusive inventions. It seems they had all offended him in some way, and in return he had found them all out. He

muttered darkly; he laughed sardonically; he crushed them one after another; but of his chief, Massy, he babbled with an envious and naïve admiration. Clever scoundrel! Don't meet the likes of him every day. Just look at him. Ha! Great! Ship of his own. Wouldn't catch *him* going wrong. No fear—the beast! And Massy, after listening with a gratified smile to these artless tributes to his greatness, would begin to shout and thump the bulkhead. "Shut up, you lunatic! Let me go to sleep, you fool!" Outside the solitary lascar told off for night duty in harbour, perhaps a youth fresh from a forest village, would stand motionless in the shadows of the deck listening to the endless drunken gabble. His heart would be thumping with breathless awe of white men: the arbitrary and obstinate men who pursue inflexibly their incomprehensible purposes,—beings with weird intonations in the voice, moved by unaccountable feelings, actuated by inscrutable motives.

(*To be continued.*)

A SEASON IN SKYE.

OUR lodge stood on the curving shore of a good-sized bay, hard by a tidal inlet where the principal trout-stream of the property mingles its peat-brown waters with the ocean brine. From the drawing-room windows is a wondrous vista of sea and mountain and moor; bold promontories tumbling headlong into the waves, the rocky crests of distant islets peeping blue above the horizon, and across the waters of the Sound, the hills of Ross and Sutherland, range upon range, sharp cut against the dappled sky. There are two fair-sized islands in the bay, and in the channel between the bigger of the two and the mainland a fringe of foaming breakers betokens one of the hidden reefs which endanger navigation in these northern seas; and near it a flock of gulls flecks the surface of the sea, as they hover over a shoal of herring. The shore is rimmed with low cliffs of black columnar basalt, hollowed out in places by the action of the sea into caves, where rock-pigeons and various sea-birds find a home. And then, what a glorious sea!—blue, sparkling, deep, and splendidly clear, with a mighty wash and swell set in motion by the Atlantic. The beach is strewn with *débris* from the cliffs, though here and there a golden sand-patch peeps through the dark masses of rock and boulders which, shell-incrusted and clothed with sea-

tangle, are piled one upon another in a fashion that gives some inkling of the force of wind and wave in these tempestuous regions.

One of these patches of sand, half a mile from the house, forms the principal landing-place whenever the sea is sufficiently smooth to enable the boatmen to put out to the little steamer which forms our chief means of communication with the outside world. In the Hebrides one seems, as it were, on the outskirts of the earth. They “march” with Nowhere; and their isolation is rendered greater by the storms which beat perpetually on their coasts.

Just now the sea is smooth on the surface, but there is a heavy ground-swell which breaks rhythmically on the rock-bound shore; and the booming of the surf, now dully moaning, now rising to a loud resonant roar—so different from the feeble plash of our southern seas—can be heard on these still summer evenings miles away. The steamer has just called, and, there being no roadway to the landing-place, small parties of villagers—men, women, boys, and girls—can be seen toiling painfully up the steep path from the sands with enormous burdens.

It is a lovely evening, and, though the clock has just struck ten, the sunset glow still lingers in the sky over the serrated ridge which forms the

horizon to the north-west. Unwilling to go in, we stroll down to the shore to see if there are any sea-trout in the tiny estuary which forms the river's mouth. There are a few small ones jumping in the sea just outside, which is an encouraging sign, but they will not be running up for another week or two; and, though we often tried, we never caught any with the fly in the salt water—nor has anybody else, they tell us, ever succeeded in doing so here. In other places that I know of excellent fishing is to be got in sea creeks and pools when the tide is coming in, and near the flood.

Our only sport, therefore, for the present is sea and loch fishing. Four miles of boggy moorland lie between us and the best of the trout-lochs, which nestles at the base of a precipitous hill, 2000 feet in height. The trout are small, few of them over half a pound; but they take well, and there are lots of them, and our baskets are easily filled. There is no boat, so we have to do the best we can, fishing from the bank or paddling in the shallow water. Our surroundings, treeless and barren, save for the scanty vesture of grass and heather upon the hillsides, are wild and, though not strikingly picturesque, thoroughly typical of the country. From the crags high above us come the dismal croakings of a couple of ravens; and they have for company three gulls that for some unaccountable reason have forsaken their native element for the mountain-tops. A pair of kestrels and a large falcon are circling overhead,

and every now and then a stone dislodged by a browsing sheep comes clattering down the hillside. A couple of weasels on a neighbouring stone-heap watch my proceedings with evident interest, displaying a boldness that is born of the security which all vermin seem to enjoy in Skye. "Hoodies," daws, ravens, magpies, carrion crows, and other enemies of the game abound all over the island; and the chough, which is now growing rare in most parts of England and Scotland, is often seen.

Skye weather is proverbially bad, and for some weeks we had little opportunity for pleasurable sea-fishing; but one bright afternoon we launched the boat to try for pollock, or lythe as they call them up here. As we glided over the smooth surface of the wondrously clear water we peered down into its many-coloured depths, where crayfish, crabs of various kinds, jellyfish, and other marine monsters, lay or crawled among the coral-like rocks, festooned with sea-anemones and dense masses of seaweed, whose long snaky fronds, like mermaids' tresses, waved gently to and fro.

Coasting along the black cliffs of the nearest island, the keeper first visited his lobster-pots and pulled them up one by one—only to find that their contents had been rifled by thievish fishermen. Presently a vicious "jug-jug" on my wife's line indicated that she had hooked something heavy, and, in spite of his furious struggles, a big pollock was hauled in and gaffed. Another

and another followed, till we had half-a-dozen in the boat, and then they suddenly stopped taking. At the end of the island we disturbed a sooty regiment of cormorants, who were standing in solemn array on a projecting mass of basalt; and the round back of a whale was espied five or six hundred yards to our left, causing no little excitement in the boat. We only caught two more pollock, and, after completing the circuit of the island, rowed home.

Next day we had our first try for sea-trout. The sun was shining brightly when we got up, but there was a scent of rain in the air; and lo! a mighty change in our little stream, which the evening before had flowed calm and placid in the long pool under the cliff above the lodge, but was now rolling a big amber flood in noise and tumult to the sea. A water-spout must have burst over the Storr and other hills around its source; and, as these Skye rivers fall almost as rapidly as they rise, Sandy, the ghillie, opines "she'll fush fine" in the afternoon. However, we did not do much good that day, though I secured a beauty just under 2 lb. in the evening; but if the fish were not on the feed, the midges were—indeed, their appetites seldom failed towards dinner-time.

We got a few sea-trout next day, but they were not running properly yet, though we could see numbers of them, with an occasional grilse, jumping at the little waterfall above the cliff pool. A week later the fishing was in full swing, re-

maining so to the end of September; and I got fair sport, and caught fresh-run silvery fish right up to the close of the season on the 31st October. Our bags were never large, but, considering that the summer was a very dry one, and the sea-trout season the worst on record in the Hebrides, we had no cause to complain. Occasionally, when the rise was on, one would catch six or eight good fish in an hour, besides losing as many more, and then they would stop taking altogether till the evening. The best fun, perhaps, was fishing in quite low water with small flies and light tackle, when the angler had to put forth his best skill and employ his most attractive lures; and in the dusk of the evening, when it was nearly dark, I often had excellent sport. He is a good fighter, the sea-trout, and, though his mouth is very tender, you must hold him hard if you want to prevent him dancing all over the pool and alarming his friends, whom you are hoping to capture afterwards. One fish, which I hooked in a small pool, jumped clean out of the water on to the stones in his frantic efforts to get free, and was secured, with my wife's aid, before he had time to wriggle back into his native element.

The biggest fish ran through, as a rule, to the upper reaches of the river, where, however, they did not take so well, and rapidly lost condition. There was one pool, with a swift shallow run at its head, and a long stretch of deep smooth-flowing water below, which

always held big trout and a few salmon. It was not a particular favourite of mine, but my friend G—— seldom left it without one or two good trout, for he is a more skilful angler than I when the water is clear and the fish are shy, and the frequent silver glint of their upturned bellies tells you they are rising short at the fly. He always preferred to fish it upstream, when the wind permitted,—a method which did not find favour with the local fishermen. We never had any luck with the salmon, though an ugly red brute took my small heckham-peckham one day, and after sulking for twenty minutes at the bottom of the pool, went off with it in his mouth.

Hard by the above-mentioned pool, on a knoll above the river-bank, enclosed by a rude stone wall and fringed with a few dwarf willows and alders, was the parish graveyard. Here the forefathers of the various hamlets sleep — “U.P.,” Free, United Free, and Established, side by side in one common resting-place; and the communion of death stills the jangle of warring sects and denominations. Now and again a small group of mourners, black-coated and trousered, with never a kilt amongst them,—one seldom sees a kilt in Skye,—gathers round a newly made grave. Depressing ceremonies are these Hebridean funerals, and eminently prosaic: there is no picturesque wake or procession, no sound of lamentation or wailing of pipes, for the pipes seem almost to have vanished from the island

along with the kilt—indeed, the sombre character of the people appears to be reflected alike in their occasions of grief and of gladness.

Toil-worn and oppressed is the air of the Skye crofter. There is no joy or laughter in his face, as in that of his Irish cousin. He looks like what he is, one who finds Nature very hard and cruel, and himself perpetually at war with her. A niggard soil and an ungenial, if temperate, climate make his life one long struggle. The tempest howls dolefully round his miserable dwelling by day and by night; the thunder of the breakers and the moan of the surf sound continually in his ears; the pitiless rain lashes him on moor and hillside, and the mountain mists enfold him in their chilly embrace. Ghosts and goblins everywhere haunt his gloomy imagination—fairies and pixies in the straths and glens; elves and brownies on the mist-crowned hills, and kelpies in the foaming torrents and the dark caverns hollowed out in the cliffs by the raging sea.

Meanwhile with us it was yet midsummer, and our spirits were unaffected by the eccentricities of the climate. The Twelfth of August was at hand, but its advent stirred only the most languid emotions within us, for the Skye grouse is too tame to be worth shooting early in the season; and for some weeks we only killed enough to keep the larder supplied. We got a good few snipe and teal, however; and one fine evening three of us sallied forth to “flight” the

duck that came in daily at nightfall from the sea to feed in some neighbouring corn-fields. As we walked by the beach, and across some fields where a herd of shaggy, fierce-looking Highland cattle were grazing, we caused great agitation in the multitudinous bird-life on sea and shore and marsh. The gulls and terns, that had been reposing peacefully on the rocks, took flight seawards; the sandpipers, redshanks, oyster-catchers, and other shore-birds flew piping along the margin of the sea; and the cormorants one by one became alarmed. Farther on the snipe rose squeaking to right and left: on every side was heard the querulous note of the curlew, the peewit's curious cry, and the whistle of golden plover. Our flighting was not very successful this evening, as the duck arrived late, and flew so low that we could not see them, though we could hear the swish of their wings tantalisingly near. I bagged a fine mallard, who nearly knocked my head off as he plumped down to the earth; my companions got three more, we had four snipe, *et voilà tout!* As we walked home through the fast-gathering darkness, an old heron flapped up, large and ghostly, under our feet, and disappeared in the gloom: the pale disc of the moon, just appearing over a headland to the east, faintly tipped the waves with silver, and the whole scene was so weird and eerie that one ceased to wonder at the superstitious imaginings of the natives.

On slack days I found a never-failing source of amusement in watching the sea-birds from the grass plot in front of the house (it bore a fine crop of hay, but was always called "the lawn"), which commanded an excellent view of the shore, so that with a pair of powerful field-glasses, indispensable to the would-be naturalist, I could see everything that was going on among the feathered folk. One morning I surprised half-a-dozen goosanders swimming up our little estuary. They sheered off on seeing me, paddling with incredible swiftness among the stones along the shore, and having a lively altercation on the way with a big skua, who appeared strongly to resent their intrusion on his fishing-ground. There seemed to be a shoal of fish in the bay, for a flock of gannets, or solan geese, were busily occupied in wheeling about in huge circles, anon dropping plummet-like with a loud splash and unerring aim into the sea; while outside the river mouth the head of a seal could be seen bobbing up and down on the waves, diving and reappearing with business-like regularity. Later on he might give me a shot with the rifle, but he is quite safe so far as I am concerned. I can never see the use or amusement in shooting the harmless and, to me, quite unnecessary seal. I do not need his oil or blubber, nor will his hide, as some ladies imagine, furnish a sealskin jacket for my wife. I did once possess a pair of sealskin leggings, but, if my

recollection serves me right, they were very hot and uncomfortable, and the reverse of ornamental. The keeper, however, does not share my views, and wages relentless war against the seals, though with only moderate success. He says they not only destroy large quantities of fish, but also do much damage to the salmon bag-nets along the coast, which latter argument furnishes, from my point of view, the best possible reason for not killing them.

Later in the season, when the moorland grass was turning a deep crimson and the hill-sides and glens began to don the russet hues of autumn, the grouse ceased to lie until you trod on their tails, or to run like chickens before the noses of the dogs, and we began shooting more in earnest, though the river still claimed a good deal of our time. Occasionally, by way of variety, we had a day at the rabbits on the boulder-strewn slopes of the higher hills, where they were to be found in considerable numbers, for the conies of this part of the island, like those of Scripture, have their habitation in the rocks.

It is a bright crisp September morning, and two of us are off early to shoot one of the outside beats. Before starting, however, I find time to lure a nice, silvery sea-trout from his lair under a big stone in the cliff pool. Having six or seven miles to travel, we hire a "ma-sheen" from the inn, which, after some delay, appears in the shape of a ramshackle old dogcart that looks like falling

to pieces any moment. Mine host's excuse for not providing us with something better is that the policeman has requisitioned his best cart to convey a refractory and inebriated female prisoner to Portree jail! Our jarvie is no Jehu, and, cudgel the fat sides of his nag as he may, about five miles an hour is our topmost speed. Three miles from home the expected break-down occurs, the near shaft giving way as we descend a steep pitch to the borders of a reedy loch abounding in wildfowl. Sandy, our handy man, is equal to the occasion, and neatly splices the fracture with a piece of wood from a neighbouring gate, but to avoid the risk of further accident we presently leave the trap and commence shooting. After picking up a few snipe, a hare, and a couple of blue-rocks along a marshy bottom, we reach the moor. The grouse are not very plentiful on this beat; but presently old Don, our trusty Gordon setter, assumes a rigid attitude, turning his head once or twice with a wistful air in our direction, as though beseeching us to hurry up. His companion, however, a young liver-coloured bitch, yclept Grace, seems to have her doubts, which are shared by Sandy.

"Them is not very sure," he remarks in his curious Keltic English.

Don, however, sticks to his point, and is presently justified by a covey of five grouse getting up, of which three are bagged. He has a less confident air over his next point, and the result is a snipe that

falls to my companion's gun. Following the bank of a big burn that forms the march, we pick up a few more grouse, two or three snipe, and a couple of golden plover out of a big flock, which we stalk in the old-fashioned circular method. In a hollow beside the stream on our left there is a great screeching and tumult of birds. On our going up to see what is the matter, a fine peregrine falcon, hotly pursued by two kestrels, darts by so close that we could easily have shot them, had we been so minded.

After lunch our steps are turned to a reedy marsh, mis-called a loch, which has a most enchanting situation in a deep corrie or cirque of high craggy hills, almost alpine in their boldness of form and outline. Emerging from a grassy glen a rivulet of exquisitely clear water meanders through the marsh, forming in places holes and pools of considerable depth. There are plenty of snipe and a good few duck and teal, but we have only moderate luck with the latter. Part of the marsh consists of quaking bog of a most alarming character; but on being assured that it is perfectly safe, we plunge in, and finally emerge plastered with rich black mud up to our hips, and feeling doubtful whether ten or a dozen snipe are a sufficient compensation for the trouble and mess, and—as we cannot but think—the risk we have encountered. Leaving the marsh, we shoot our way homewards six or seven miles across the moor, doing the last hour of the tramp in the dark.

Our next long day was in the

opposite direction. Climbing to the top of the *beallach*, or pass, over the range of hills which forms the backbone of the northern half of the island, we tried a big tract of high ground with very indifferent results. If, however, the sport was poor the weather was splendid, and we had gorgeous views, at one time eastwards over the channel to the peaks of Applecross, the imposing mass of Ben Slioch keeping watch and ward over Loch Maree, and the flat expanse of Sutherland broken by a few isolated mountains; at another, across the blue waters of the Minch, studded with rocky islets of curious form, some of them round or pointed, others flat like natural tables, to the wild hills of Harris and the long coast-line of the Lews melting away in the northern distance, while below us the ever-restless sea could be heard, and occasionally seen, as its waves broke on the rock-bound coast and dark foam-fringed headlands—one of them surmounted by an ancient ruined castle.

Descending to lower ground, we saw less, but shot more. In the afternoon, satisfied with our modest bag of twenty-three grouse we left the moor to try some likely-looking snipe-bogs. As we approached the first somewhat incautiously, three mallards rose just out of shot, but a couple of teal were more confiding, and paid the penalty for their want of wariness. Eight couple of snipe and a few sundries brought the bag up to forty-five head, and, being persons of moderate sporting ambitions, we climbed into

the "masheen," which was waiting for us at a turn of the road, and drove homewards well satisfied with our day's work.

And now winter is coming on apace. The evenings grow longer and longer, the storms more frequent and severe, and sometimes for weeks together all communication by sea is cut off. The ordinary summer tourist, who comes and goes with the swallow, can have little idea what the island is like in the short winter days when there are only eight hours' light, and the infrequent sun, barely topping the crests of the hills, shines with a sickly pallor in the watery skies. As I write the rich hues of autumn have faded; the lush grass has disappeared; even the river has lost its colour, and the deep amber of its summer spates has given place to a pale yellowy-brown, like weak toast-and-water, which scarcely varies with the height of the stream. Judged by the thermometer test the weather is seldom cold; but with a perpetual hurricane blowing one cannot feel exactly warm. Our guests have deserted us one after another, and I cannot induce anybody to undertake the long journey from the south; so, as there are no neighbours, I have to do my last few weeks' shooting alone, which is a pity, as the sport is now at its best. The grouse continue to lie well, and there are plenty of them left; the woodcock are beginning to come in, while the snipe and wildfowl are more numerous than ever. Even in hard weather—when the north-easter is whistling, and the land is in the grip of

the frost, and the moor is too deep in snow for grouse-shooting—there are always flocks of golden plover and blue-rocks, with a few snipe and duck, in the low marshy ground along the shore near the lodge; or else a moderate mixed bag can be obtained by following the banks of the smaller burns and ditches that remain unfrozen. Last night there was a heavy storm, and when I shoulder my gun and set forth on my solitary tramp in the morning, the landscape has put on the garb of winter. The lower foreground is mottled, but the uplands are draped in purest white; a thick velvety mantle of snow covers the distant Raasay hills, and the Storr Rock dazzles like Monte Rosa, a thin crescent moon rising just above its gleaming shoulders. Nor are there lacking other signs of the season's rigours. Overhead a flock of wild geese are winging their way southwards in a long thin line, and with unmelodious croakings. In the circular trout-loch, a couple of miles from the house, three large wild swans and a cygnet are to be seen swimming about, and, while keeping well out of shot, they refuse to budge, even when a gun is fired. These latter birds seldom put in an appearance, save in exceptionally hard weather, such as we were now beginning to experience.

In December the elements seemed to go crazy. Hurricane followed upon hurricane, with lashing rain and hail that threatened to smash our windows, and, occasionally, vivid lightning and terrific peals of

thunder, which in winter always impress the imagination with a peculiar sense of awe. It must be hard, indeed, to retain one's cheerfulness through a Hebridean winter, and after experiencing some of its eccentricities one can no longer be surprised at the oppressed and careworn demeanour of the inhabitants.

During one of these storms I took a walk along the grandest part of the coast, where the cliffs rose to a height of two or three hundred feet in tall vertical columns of black basalt similar to those of the celebrated Fingal's Cave in Staffa. Here, however, was the additional curious phenomenon of the rock-pillars rising from a foundation of tawny sandstone with horizontal strata. Crawling on my stomach for fear of the wind, I looked over the edge at the waves far below lashing themselves into foam against the rocks with impotent fury. One tall column, detached from the main mass, was festooned about its base with blue - rocks, sea - swallows, and kittiwakes, sheltering themselves from the blast: only the gannets braved the storm, and never ceased wheeling round and round and plunging unconcernedly beneath the troubled surface of the water, while the cries of the seamews blended harmoniously enough with the wailing of the wind. The island hillsides were half-obscured by driving storms of sleet and rain; and dense cloud-masses, heavy with coming snow, hung like a leaden pall over the peaks of Torridon.

Not a very attractive scene, you may say, yet its very wildness and desolation, so characteristic of this melancholy tempest-beaten isle, fascinated me in spite of its utter dreariness.

The elements continuing unpropitious, the problem of how we were to make our escape began to occupy our minds. The thunder of the surf was a perpetual reminder in our ears that retreat by sea was out of the question, and the road across the *beallach*, which rose nearly 1000 feet above the sea, was already pretty deep in snow, and any further fall would render it quite impassable. More than a week elapsed before the weather moderated; but finally a rare succession of three fine days enabled us to undertake the long drive over the hills to Portree, which we reached two hours after nightfall. The boat for the south left before day-break, and we had steamed some distance down the channel before the dawn came up slowly over the Raasay hills and faintly illuminated the gaunt forms of the Coolin towering darkly on our right. At Kyle of Loch Alsh we quitted the steamer, not caring to face the stretch of stormy water that lay between us and Mallaig; and, as the train wound round the shores of Loch Carron, we had our last distant peeps of Skye, its bold peaks and bleak moorlands, its rocky coasts and cliff-encircled bays, which to us were henceforth to be no more than a memory.

HUGH E. M. STUTFIELD.

EPISODES IN THE ADVENTURES OF M. D'HARICOT.

(Translated from the original French by J. STORER CLOUSTON.)

THE MONSIEUR MEETS MR LUMME AND ENGAGES A VALET.

I.

"On Earth men style him 'Richard,'
But the Gods hail him 'Dick!'"

—An English Poet (*adapted*).

"A FRIEND in need," say the English, "is a friend indeed."

And who could be more in need of a friend than I at that moment? It was like the rolling up of London fog-banks, and the smile of the sun peeping through at last. No longer was I quite alone in my exile. If you have ever wandered solitary through an unknown city, listened to a foreign tongue, and to none other, eaten alien viands, fallen into strange misadventures; and all without a single friendly ear to confide your troubles to, you will sympathise with the joyous swelling of my heart as I faced my barrister at that luncheon.

And he, I assure you, was a very changed person from the indifferent Englishman of the journey. The good heart was showing through; still obscured though it was by the self-contained manner and the remnants of that suspicion with which every Briton is taught to regard the insinuating European.

I have already given you a sketch of his exterior: the smooth fair hair, the ruddy cheek, the clear eye, and, I should add, the compressed and resolute mouth; also, not least,

the admirable fit of his garments. Now I can fill in the picture. Name, to begin with, Richard Shafthead, younger son of honest Conservative baronet; elder brother provided with an income, I gather,—Dick with injunctions to earn one. Hence attendance at Courts of Justice, a respectable gravity of apparel, and that compression of the lips. In speech, courteous upon a slight acquaintance, though without any excessive anxiety to please; on greater intimacy, very much to the point, without regarding much the susceptibilities of his audience. Yet this bluntness was tempered always by good-fellowship, and sometimes by a smile; and beneath it flowed, deep down, and scarcely ever bubbling into the light of day, a stream of sentiment that linked him with the poetry of his race. My friend Shafthead would have laughed outright had you told him this. Nevertheless, this secret is the skeleton in the respectable English cupboard.

Your John Bull is an edifice of sentiment, jealously covered by a hoarding on which are displayed advertisements of pills and other practical commodities. It is his one fear

lest any one should discover this preposterous and hideous erection is not the real building.

Dick's only comment on the above statement would probably be that I had mixed my metaphors or had exceeded at lunch. But he is shrewd enough to know in his heart that I have but spoken the truth, even though my metaphors were as heterogeneous as the ark of Noah. How else can you explain the astonishing contrast between those who write the songs of England and those whose industry enables them to recompense the singers?

No doubt there is a noticeable difference between the Poet and the People in every land and every race, but in England it is so staggering. The hair of the English poet is so very long, his eye so very frenzied, his verse so steeped in emotion, so buoyed by melody. Even his prose appeals to the heart rather than to the head. Thackeray weeps as he writes of good women, Scott blushes as he writes of bad. No one is cynical but the villains. The heroines are all pure as the best cocoa.

Then look at the check suits and the stony eyes of Mr Cook's *protégés*. Do they understand what Tennyson has written for them? If not, why do they pay for it?

John Bull and John Milton; William Bull and William Shakespeare; Lord Bull and Lord Byron; Charles Bull and Charles Dickens,—how are these couples related? By this religious, moral, sentimental stream: welling in one; hidden

in another under ten tons of shyness and roast beef; a torrent here; a trickle there, sometimes almost dry in a dusty season. That is how.

Does Dick again recommend teetotalism as a cure for these speculations? Come with me to your rooms, my friend, and let us glance through your library.

I take up a volume of Shakespeare, and find it contains the sonnets.

"Ah! Shakespeare's sonnets," I say with an air of patronage towards that eminent poet. "You know them?"

"Used to know 'em a little."

He is giving me another taste of that characteristic British stare. Evidently he is offended by my tone, and will fall an easy victim to my next move.

"They are much overrated," I say, putting the book away.

"You should write to the 'Times' about it," he replies sarcastically; and then adds with conviction, "They are about the finest things in English."

"Yet no Englishman reads them," I remarked lightly.

"I used to know half-a-dozen of 'em by heart," he retorts.

Half-a-dozen of those miracles of sensuous fiction off by heart! Prosaic Briton! I do not say this aloud, but take next the songs of Kipling, and profess not to understand one of these. To convince me it is not mere nonsense he reads and expounds. He has been round the world and shot wild beasts on the veldt and in the jungle, and can explain al-

lusions and share exotic sentiments. Is this man mere plum-pudding and international perfidy, who feels thus the glamour of the song?

"Ah, here is a novel of Zola!" I exclaim. "You enjoy him, of course?"

"A filthy brute," says Dick. "I read half of that, and I am keeping it now for shaving papers."

There is perhaps more strength of conviction than critical judgment in this comment. I might retort that all the water in the world neither has been passed through a filter nor foams over a fall, and that the pond and the gutter have their purpose in the world. I do not make this reply, however; I merely note that a strong sentiment must underlie a strong prejudice.

As you will perhaps have gathered, my good Dick had his limitations. He could be sympathetic: if, for instance, he were to see me insulted, beaten, robbed of my purse and my mistress, and blinded in one eye, he would, I am sure, feel for me deeply, and show himself most tactful in his consolation. But it would require some such well-marked instance to open the gates of his heart; and in minor matters I should not think of applying to him—unless indeed it was a practical service he could perform.

He himself had held his peace and confided in no one when his fair cousin married the wealthy manufacturer of soda-water; and his heart had long since healed.

In the days of his wild oats, when the duns were knocking at his door, he had retired from St James' Street to a modest apartment in the Temple, sold such of his effects as were marketable, and philosophically sought a cheap restaurant and a coarser tobacco. His debts were now paid, and all was well again. When he did not get the degree he was expected to at Oxford, he may have said "Damn!" but I doubt if he enlarged on this observation.

What did that disappointment matter to-day? Then why should other people make a fuss if they were hurt?

Yet his heart was as a child's if you could extract it from its wrappings of tinfoil and brown paper, and I am happy I knew him long enough to see him "play the fool," as he would term it.

On that first afternoon of our acquaintance I found him courteous before lunch, genial after (I took care to "make him proud," as the English say). I was perfectly frank, told him my true name, the plot that had miscarried, my flight to England, everything.

"I am not Bunyan, I am not Cellarini; but merely Augustine D'Haricot eternally at your service," I said. "You have saved me from prison, perhaps from the scaffold!"

He laughed.

"It wouldn't have been as bad as that, but I'm glad to have been of any use." And then, changing the subject as an Englishman does when complimented (for he holds that

either you lie and are a knave or tell the truth and are a fool), he asked—

"What are you going to do now?"

"That depends upon your advice," I replied; "what is my danger? How wise is it to move freely in this country?"

"There is no danger at all if it is only a political offence," he answered. "Unless you've been picking pockets or doing anything else as well."

I assured him I had not, and he promised to inquire into the case and give me a full assurance on the next morning.

"And now," I said, "tell me, my friend, how to live as an Englishman. I do not mean to adopt the English mind, the English sentiment, but only to move in your world, so long as I must live in it. I want to see, I want to hear, I want to record my impressions and my adventures. As the time is not ripe to wield the sword, I shall wield the eyes and the pen. Also, I shall doubtless fall in love, and I should like to hunt a fox and shoot a pheasant."

We laughed together at this programme; in brief, we made a good beginning.

That afternoon we set out together to look for suitable apartments for myself, and by a happy chance we had hardly gone a hundred paces before we spied a gentleman approaching us, whom Shafthead declared to be a venerable authority on London life; also a cousin of his own.

"But will he not be busy?" I inquired.

"Young devil," answered Shafthead, "it will serve to keep him out of mischief for an hour or two."

Thereupon I was presented to Mr Teddy Lumme, a young gentleman of small stature, with a small, cheerful, clean-shaven dark face, and a large hat that sloped backwards and sideways towards a large collar. His elbows moved as though he were driving a cab, his boots shone brightly enough to serve for mirrors, his morning coat was out in imitation of the "pink" of a huntsman, a large mass of variegated silk was fastened beneath his collar by a neat pearl pin; in a word, he belonged to a type that is universal, yet this specimen was unmistakably English. In age, I learned afterwards, he was just twenty-five, emancipated for little more than a year from the University of Oxford, and still enjoying the relief from the rigorous rules of that institution.

No accusation of reticence to be made against Mr Lumme! He talked all the time, cheerfully and artlessly.

"You want rooms?" he said, "Quelle chose? I mean, don't you know, what kind? I don't know much French, I'm afraid. Oh, you talk English. Devilish glad to hear it. I say, Dick, you remember that girl I told you of? Well, it's just as I said. I knew, damn it all. What do you want to give?" (This to me.) "You don't care much? That simplifies matters."

In this strain Mr Lumme entertained us on our way,

Shafthead regarding him with a half-amused, half-sardonic grin, of which his relative seemed entirely oblivious; while I enjoyed myself amazingly. I felt like Captain Cook or the gallant Marchand palaver-ing with the chiefs of some equatorial state.

"I demand a cold bath and an English servant," I said. "Anything else characteristic you can add, but those are essential."

I do not know whether Lumme quite understood this to be a jest. He took me to three sets of apartments, and at each asked first to be

shown the bathroom and then the servant, after which he inquired the price, and whether a tenant was at liberty to introduce any guest at any hour.

Finally, to end the story of that day which began in jail and ended so merrily, I found myself the tenant of a highly comfortable set of apartments, with everything but the valet supplied at an astonishingly high price.

"However," I said to myself, "it may be expensive, but it is better than ten years' transportation for burgling Fisher!"

II.

"Little, cheerful, and honest:—do you not know the species?"—KOVALEFFSKI.

I had left my hotel and settled in my apartments; the labels with Nelson Bunyan were removed from my luggage; I had been assured that so long as I remained on English soil I was safe. Next thing, I must find a servant: one who should "know the ropes" of an English life. Lumme had promised to make inquiries for me, and I had impressed upon him that the following things were essential; in fact, I had declared that without them I should never entertain an application for one instant. First, he must be of such an appearance as would do me credit, whether equipped in the livery I had already designed for him, in the cast-off suits I should provide him with, or in the guise of an attendant at the

chase or upon the moors. Then, that he must be honest enough to trust in the room with a handful of mixed change, sober enough to leave alone with a decanter, discerning enough to arrange an odd lot of sixteen boots into eight pairs, cleanly enough to pack collars without soiling them. Finally, he must be polite, obliging, industrious, discreet, and, if possible, a little religious,—not sufficiently so to criticise my conduct, but enough to regulate his own.

I wrote this list down, and handed it to the obliging Teddy.

"You will procure him by this afternoon?" I said.

"I know a man who keeps a Methodist footman in his separate establishment," answered Lumme, after a moment's re-

flection. "That's the kind of article you require, I suppose. If you get 'em too moral, there's apt to be a screw loose somewhere; and if you get 'em the other way, the spoons go. Well, I can't promise, but I'll do my best."

So this amiable young man departed, and I, to pass the time, walked into Piccadilly, and there took my seat upon the top of an omnibus to enjoy the sunshine and be for a time a spectator of the life in the streets. To obtain a better view I sat down on the front bench close to the driver's elbow, and we had not gone very far before this individual turned to me and remarked with a cordiality that pleased me infinitely and a perspicacity that astonished me—

"Been long in London, sir?"

"You perceive that I am a stranger, then?" I asked.

"Well," said the man, as he cracked his whip and drove his lumbering coach straight at an orifice between two cabs just wide enough, it seemed to me, for a wheelbarrow, "I'm a observer, I am. When I sees that speckled tie droopin' from a collar of unknown horigin, and them rum kind of boots, I says to myself, 'A Rooshian, for 'alf a sovereign.' Come from Rooshia, sir?"

The man's naïveté delighted me.

"I belong to an allied Power," I replied, wondering if his power of observation would enable him to decide my nationality now.

He seemed to debate the question as, with an *apropos*

greeting to each cabman, his 'bus bumped them to the side and sailed down the middle of the street.

"Native o' Manchuria, perhaps?" he hazarded.

"Not quite. Try again."

"Siberia?" he suggested next.

Seeing that either his imagination or my appearance confined his speculations to Asia, I told him forthwith that I was French.

"French?" he said. "Well now, sir, I'm surprised to 'ear it. If you'll excuse me saying so, you don't look like no Frenchman."

"Why not?" I asked.

"I always thought they was little chaps, no bigger than a monkey. Why, you're as tall as most Englishmen."

Considering that my friend could not possibly have measured more than five feet two inches, and that I am five feet nine in my socks, I was highly diverted by this.

"Have you seen many Frenchmen?" I asked him.

"I knew one once," he replied after a minute or two's thought and a brief interruption to invite some ladies on the pavement to enter his 'bus. "He was a waiter at the Bull's 'Ead, 'Ighbury. I drove a bus that way then, and there was a young lady served in the bar him and me was sweet on. Nasty, greasy little man he was—meaning no reflection on you, sir. They couldn't make out where the fresh butter went; and when he left—which he 'ad to, for kissin' the missus when she

wasn't 'erself, 'aving 'ad a drop more than 'er usual—do you know what they found, sir?"

I confessed my inability to guess the secret.

"Why, he'd put it all on 'is beastly 'air—two pounds a-week, sir, of the very best fresh butter in 'Ighbury. Perhaps, sir, I've been prejudiced against Frenchmen in consequence."

I admitted that he had every excuse, and asked him whether my buttered compatriot had won the maiden's affections in addition to his other offences.

"No, sir," said he; "I'm 'appy to say she 'ad more sense. More sense than to take either of us," he added, with a deep sigh; and then, as if to quench melancholy reflections, hailed another driver who was passing us in the most hilarious fashion.

"'Old your 'at on, ole man!" he shouted. "Them hopera-'ats is getting scarce, you know."

The other driver—a bottle-nosed man, redeemed only from unusual shabbiness by the head-gear in question—winked, leered, and made some reply about "not having such a fat head underneath it as some people."

My friend turned to me with a confidential air.

"You saw that gentleman as I addressed?" he said in an impressive voice. "Well, that there man was driving 'is own kerridge not five years ago. On the Stock Exchange he was, and worth ten thousand a-year, if he was worth a penny, 'ouse in Park Lane, and married to a daughter of a baronite. He's

told me all that hisself, so it's true and no 'umbug.

"'Ow did he lose his money? Hunfortunit speculations and Consols goin' down; but you bein' a furriner won't likely understand."

Looking as unsophisticated as possible, I pressed my friend for an explanation of these mysteries.

"Well," said he, "it's something like this. If you goes on the Stock Exchange you buys what they calls Consols—that's stocks and shares of various sorts and kinds, but principally mines in Australia and inventions for to make things different from what they is at present. That's what's called makin' a corner, which ain't a corner exactly in the usual sense, not as used in England that's to say, but a kind o' American variety.

"What 'o, Bill! Bloomin', thank you; 'ows yourself?" (This to another driver passed upon the road.)

"As I was sayin', sir, this 'ere pore friend o' mine speculated in Consols, and prices being what they calls up and then shiftin', he loses and the bank wins. Inside o' twenty-four hours that there gentleman was changed from one of the richest men in the City into a pore cove a-lookin' out for a job like you and me."

"And he chose driving an omnibus?" I asked.

"'Adn't got no choice. He was too much of a gentleman to sink to a ordinary profession, and drivin' a pair o' 'orses seemed to 'im more in keepin' with 'is position than

drivin' one 'orse in a cab, which was the only thing left."

He paused, and then shaking his head with an air of sentiment, continued—

"Wonderful 'ow sensitive he is, sir. He wouldn't part with that there hopera-'at, not if you gave 'im five 'undred pounds; yet he can't abear to 'ear it chipped, not except in a kind o' delicate way same as I did just now. You 'eard me, sir? 'Hopera-'ats is scarce,' says I; but I dursn't sail closer to the wind nor that. 'E'd say, 'Old your jaw, Halfred,' or words to that effect', quick enough. Comes o' bein' bred too fine for the job, I tells him often: I says it to 'im straight, sir,— 'Comes o' bein' bred too fine for the job,' says I."

At this point my friend's attention was called from the dramatic history of his fellow-driver to the exigencies of their common profession, and I had an opportunity of studying more attentively this entertaining specimen of the Cockney.

He was, as I have said, a very short man, from thirty to thirty-five years of age I judged, red-cheeked and snub-nosed, with a bright cheerful eye, and the most friendly and patronising manner. Yet he was perfectly respectful and civil, despite his knowledge of my unfortunate nationality. In fact it seemed his object to place me as far as possible at my ease, and enable me to forget for a space the blot upon my origin.

"There's some quite clever Frenchmen, I've 'eard tell," he said presently—"that there

'ydrophobia man, and Napoleon Bonyparty in his way too, I suppose, though we don't think so much o' 'im over 'ere."

"I am sorry to hear that," I said.

"Well, sir," he explained, "we believes in a man havin' his fair share of what's goin'. Like as if me and a friend goes inter a public-'ouse, and another gentleman he comes in and he says, 'What's it going to be this time?' or 'Name your gargle, gents,' or words to some such effect'; and we says, 'Right you are, ole man,' and 'as a drink at his expense. Now it wouldn't be fair if I says to the young lady, 'I'll 'ave a 'ole bottle of Scotch whisky, miss, and what I can't drink I'll take 'ome in a noospaper,' and I leaves 'im to pay for all that; would it, sir? Well, that's what Bonyparty done; 'e tried to get more nor his share o' what was goin' in Europe. Not that it effects us much, we bein' able to take care of ourselves; but we don't like to see it, sir. That's 'ow it is."

All this time we had been going eastwards into the City of London, and now we were arrived at the most extraordinary scene of confusion you can possibly imagine. I should be afraid to say how many 'buses and cabs were struggling and surging in a small open space at the junction of several streets. Foot-passengers in hundreds hustled along the pavements or dodged between the horses, and, immovable in the midst of it, the inevitable policeman appeared

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actually to be sifting this mob according to some mysterious scheme.

"Cheer 'o!" cried my friend upon the box. "'Ow's the price o' lime juice this morning?"

"That there's what we calls the Bank, sir, where the Queen keeps 'er money, and the Rothschilds and the like o' them; guarded by seven 'undred of the flower o' the British army it is, the hoffer bein' hinvariably a millionaire 'isself, in case he's tempted to steal. Garn yerself, and git yer face syringed with a fire-'ose! You can't clean it no 'ow else.

"The 'andsome hedifice to your right, sir, is the Mansion 'Ouse; not the station of that name, but the 'ome of the Lord Mayor. Kind o' Governor of the city, 'e is. 'As a hextraordinary show of 'is own on takin' the hoath of hoffice. People comes all the way from Halgiers and San Francisco to see it. Camels and 'orses got up like chargers of the holden times, and men disguised so as their own girls wouldn't know 'em. Representing hart, hindustries, and hempire, that's their game.

"Pleeceman, them there bloomin' whiskers of yours will get mowed off by a four-wheel cab some day, and then 'ow'll you look? Too bloomin' funny, am I? More'n them whiskers is, hinterfering with the traffic like that.

"Yes, sir, we 'as a rest 'ere for a few minutes; we ain't near at the end yet though."

I shall leave it to your judgment to guess which of these remarks were addressed to me,

and which to various of his countrymen in this vortex of wheels and human beings. For a few minutes he now sat at ease in a quieter street (though, my faith! no street in this city of London but would seem busy in most towns), apparently deliberating what topic to enter upon next. I say apparently deliberating, but on further acquaintance with my good "Halfred," as he called himself (the aspirated form of "Alfred" used by the Cockney, Alfred being the name of England's famous monarch), I came to the conclusion that his mind never was known to go through any such process. What came first into his head flew straight to his tongue, till by constant use that organ had got into a state of unstable equilibrium, like the tongue of a toy mandarin that waggles for five minutes if you move him ever so gently. In a word, "Halfred" was an inveterate chatterbox. Even had I been that very compatriot of mine who had so deeply and, I could not but admit, so justly roused his ire, he would, I am sure, have chattered just as hard.

By the time we were under way again and threading the eastern alleys of the city,—for they are called streets only by courtesy,—his tongue had started too, and he was talking just as hard as ever. Now, however, his conversation took a more reminiscent and a more personal turn, and this led to such surprising consequences that I shall keep the last half of our journey together for a separate chapter.

III.

"Your valet? Pardon; I thought he had come to measure the gas!"—HERCULE D'ENVILLE.

Out of the limits of this city of London we drove into the beginnings of the East. Not the Orient of the poet and the traveller, the land of the thousand and one nights, but the miles and miles of brick where some millions of Londoners pass an existence that ages one to think of. Picture to yourself a life more desolate of joys than the Arctic, more crowded with fellow-animals than any ant-heap, uglier than the Great Desert, as poor and as diseased as Job. Not even the wealthy there to gossip about and gape at, no great house to envy and admire, no glitter anywhere to distract, except in the music-halls of an evening. Yet they work on, and do not hang themselves—poor devils!

But I grow serious where I had set out to be gay, and thoughtful when you are asking for a somersault. Worse still, I am solemn, sitting at the elbow of my cheerful Halfred.

That genial driver of the omnibus was not one whit depressed upon coming into this region; nor, to tell the truth, was I that afternoon, for I could not see the backward parts, but only the wide main road, very airy after the lanes of the city, and crowded with quite a different population. No longer the business man with shining hat, hands in pocket, quick step, and anxious face; no longer the well-dressed woman hurrying

likewise through the throng no longer the jingling hansom; but instead the compatriot of the prophets, the costermonger with his barrow, the residue of Hungary and Poland, the pipe of the British workman. Wains of hay in the midst of the road, drays and lorries and an occasional omnibus jolting at the sides,—to be sure there was life enough to look at.

As to my friend, his talk began to turn more upon his own private affairs. Apparently there was less around to catch his attention, and, as I have said, he had to talk, and so spoke of himself. As I sat on the top of that 'bus listening with continuous amusement to his candid reminiscences or naïf philosophy, I studied him more attentively than ever, for, as you shall presently hear, I had more reason. His dress I noticed was neat beyond the average of drivers: a coat of box-cloth, once light yellow, now of various shades, but still quite respectable; a felt hat with a flat top, glazed to throw off the rain; a coloured scarf around his neck, whether concealing a collar or not I could not say; and something round his knees that might once have been a rug or a horse-cloth, or even a piece of carpet.

"Yus," said Halfred meditatively, as he cracked his whip

and urged his 'bus at headlong speed through a space in the traffic, "it's some rum changes o' luck I've 'ad in my day. My father he give me a surprisin' good eddication for a hembyro 'bus-driver, meaning me to go into the stevedore business in Lime'ouse basin, same as 'e was 'imself, but my 'ead got swelled a-talkin' to a most superior policeman what 'ad come down in the world, and nothing would satersfy me but mixin' in 'igh life. So our rector 'e gives me a introduction to a bloomin' aunt o' his in the country what wanted a boy in buttons, and into buttons I goes, and I says to myself, says I, 'Halfred, you're goin' to be a credit to your fam'ly, you are.' That's what I says. Blimy! I often larf now a-thinkin' of it!" He paused to blow his nose in a primitive but effective fashion, and smiled gently to himself at these recollections of his youthful optimism.

"How long did you remain in these buttons?" I asked him.

"Till I outgrewed them," said Halfred.

"And after that?"

"I was servant to a gentleman what hadvertised for a honest young man, hexperience bein' no hobject."

I asked him how he liked that.

"I was comfortable enough, that I can't deny," said Halfred.

"And why, then, did you leave?"

"The heverlastin' reason why I does most foolish things, sir. My 'eart is too susceptible,

and the lady's-maid was too captivatin'. She wouldn't 'ave nothin' to do with me, so I chucks the 'ole thing up and says I, 'I'll be hinderpendent, I will.' 'Ence I'm a-drivin' a 'bus."

"Are you happy now?" I inquired.

"Well," said he, candidly, "I wouldn't say as I was exactly 'umped, but it ain't all bottled beer sittin' in this bloomin' arm-chair with your whiskers froze stiff and the 'orses 'ears out o' sight in the fog. And there ain't much variety in it nor much chance of becomin' a millionaire. Hoften and hoften I thinks to myself, What 'o for a pair o' trousers to fold and a good fire in the servants' 'all, and hinderpendence be blowed!"

I think it was at this moment that the inspiration came into my head. It was rash you will doubtless say. It was certainly sudden, but then, as perhaps you have discovered ere now, I am not the most prudent of men. This little cheerful Halfred had taken my fancy enormously, and my heart was warmed towards him.

"Halfred," I asked abruptly, "are you still an honest young man?"

"I 'ope so, sir," said he with becoming modesty and evident surprise.

"And now you are experienced?"

"Well, sir," he said, "you've 'ad threepence worth o' this 'ere bus and you 'aven't seed me scrape off no paint yet."

"But I mean, you are experienced in folding trousers;

in packing shirts; in varnishing boots; in all the niceties of your old profession; are you not? You would do credit to a gentleman if he should engage you?"

Halfred looked at me sharply, with a true Cockney's suspicion of what he feared might be "chaff."

"You ain't a pulling my leg, sir?" he inquired guardedly.

"On the contrary, I am taking your hand, as an honest and experienced valet, Halfred."

"You knows of a gentleman as wants one?" said he.

"I do," I answered with conviction.

"It ain't yourself, sir?"

"It is," said I.

"Blimy!" exclaimed Halfred in an audible aside.

"What about references?" said he.

"Oh, references; yes. I suppose you had better have some references," I replied; though, to tell the truth, I had not thought of them before.

He rubbed his chin with the back of his hand and screwed his rosy face into a deliberative expression, while his eyes twinkled cheerfully.

"I don't mind 'aving a go at the job," he remarked, after a couple of minutes' reflection.

"Apply this evening," I said. "Bring a reference if you have one, and I shall engage you, Halfred!"

For the rest of our journey together his gratitude and pleasure, his curiosity, and his qualms as to how much he remembered and how much he had forgotten of a man-ser-

vant's duties, delighted me still further, and made me congratulate myself upon my discrimination and judgment. We parted company among the docks and shipping of the very far East of London, and after rambling for a time by the busy wharves and breezy harbour basins, and marvelling again at the vastness and variety of this city, I mounted another omnibus and drove back to my rooms.

"A man to see you, sir," said the maid.

Could it be Halfred already? No. It was a very different individual; a tall and stately man, with a prim mouth and an eye of unfathomable discretion. He stood in an attitude denoting at once respect for me and esteem for himself, and followed me to my room upon a gently creaking boot.

"Well," said I, at a loss to know whether he came to collect a tax or induce me to order a coffin, "what can I do for you?"

"Mr Lumme, sir," said he in a mincing voice, "has informed me that you was requiring a man-servant. Enclosed you will find Mr Lumme's recommendation."

He handed me a letter which ran as follows:—

"DEAR MONSIEUR,—I have found the very man you want. He was valet to Lord Pluckham for five years, and could not have learned more from any one. Pluckham was very particular as to dress, and had many affairs requiring a discreet servant. He only left

when Pluckham went bankrupt, and has had excellent experience since. Been witness in two divorce cases, and is highly recommended by all. Also a Primitive Wesleyan by religion and well educated. You cannot find a better man in London, nor as good, I assure you. Don't lose this chance. I have had some trouble, but am glad to have found the very article.—Yrs. truly, EDWARD LUMME."

This was a pretty dilemma! The industrious and obliging Lumme had found one jewel, and in the meanwhile I had engaged another. I felt so ungrateful and guilty that I was ashamed to let my good Teddy discover what I had done. So instead of telling Mr Mingle at once that the place was filled, I resolved to find him deficient in some important point and decline to engage him on these grounds. Easier resolved than done.

"Your experience has been wide?" I asked, looking critical and feeling foolish.

"If I may say so, sir, it has," he said, glancing down modestly at the hat he held in his hands.

"You can iron a hat?" I inquired, casting round in my mind for some task too heavy for this Hercules.

He smiled with, I thought, a little pity.

"Oh, certainly, sir."

"Can you cook?"

"I have hitherto stayed at houses where separate cooks was kept," said he; "but if we should happen to be a-

camping out in Norway, sir, there isn't nothing but French pastry I won't be happy to oblige with—on a occasion, that's to say, sir."

Not only were Mr Mingle's accomplishments comprehensive, but he evidently looked upon himself as already engaged by me. Internally cursing his impudence, I asked next if he could sew.

"At a pinch, sir," said he. "That is," he added, correcting this vulgar expression, "if the maids is indisposed, or like as if we was on board your yacht, sir, and there was no hother alternative."

"We" again,—and it seemed Mr Mingle expected me to keep a yacht!

Could he load and clean a gun, saddle a horse, ride a bicycle, oil a motor-car, read a cipher, and manage a camera? Yes; in the absence of the various officials which "our" establishment maintained for these purposes, Mr Mingle would be able and willing to oblige. Moreover, he talked with a beautiful accent, and only very occasionally misused an aspirate: and there could be no doubt he would make an impressive appearance in any livery I could design. Even as a Pierrot he would have looked dignified. On what pretext could I reject this paragon?

"Can you drive an omnibus?" I demanded at last with a flash of genius.

This time Mr Mingle looked fairly disconcerted.

"*Drive a homnibus!*" said he. "No, sir; my position

and prospects have always been such that, I am happy to say, I have never had the opportunity of practising."

I shook my head.

"I am afraid," I said, "that you won't suit me, Mingle. It is my amusement to keep a private omnibus."

"Oh, private!" said Mr Mingle, as though that might make a difference.

But quickly I added—

"It is painted and upholstered just like the others. In fact, I buy them second-hand when beyond repair. Also, I take poor people from the workhouse for a drive. And you must drive it in all weathers."

That was the end of Mr Mingle. In fact, I think he was glad to find himself safely out of my room again; and what he thought of my tastes, and even of my sanity, I think I can guess.

That evening my friend Halfred appeared, bringing a testimonial to his honesty and sobriety from the proprietor of the stables, and a brief line of eulogy from the officer who collected the pence and supplied the tickets upon his own 'bus. This last certificate ran thus—I give it exactly as it stood:—

"certtifieng alfred Winkes is
1 of The best obligging and
You will find him kind to
animils yours sinseerly

"P. WIDDUP."

As Halfred explained to me, this was entirely unsolicited, and Mr Widdup, he was sure, would feel hurt if he learned

that it had not been presented.

"You can tell him," I said, "that it has secured the situation for you."

I had just told him that I should expect him to begin his duties upon the following morning, and he was inspecting my apartment with an air of great interest and satisfaction, when there came a knock upon the door, and in walked Mr Teddy Lumme himself. He was in evening dress, covered by the most recent design in topcoats and the most spotless of white scarves. On his head he wore a large opera-hat tilted at the same angle, and on his feet small and shiny boots.

"Hullo!" said he, "sorry; am I interrupting? Came to see if you'd booked Mingle. I suppose you have."

"A thousand thanks, my friend, for your trouble," I replied with an earnestness proportionate to my feeling of compunction. "Mingle was indeed admirable, exquisite. In fact he was perfect in every respect save one."

"What's that?" said Teddy, looking a little surprised.

"He could not drive an omnibus."

I am afraid my friend Teddy thought that I was joking. He certainly seemed to have difficulty in finding a reply to this. Then an explanation struck him.

"You mean what we call a coach," he said. "Thing with four horses and a toot-toot-toot business—post-horn we call it, What?"

"I mean an omnibus," I replied. "The elegant, the fascinating British 'bus. And here I have found a man who can drive one. This is my new servant, Halfred Winkes."

Lumme stared at him, as well he might, for my Halfred cut a very different figure from the grave, polished, quietly attired Mingle. To produce the very best impression possible he had dressed himself in a suit of conspicuously chequered cloth, very tight in the leg and wide at the foot, and surmounted by a very bright blue scarf tightly knotted round his neck. In his button-hole was an artificial tulip, in his pocket a wonderful red - and - yellow handkerchief. His ruddy face shone so brightly that I shrewdly suspected his friend Widdup had scrubbed it with a handful of straw, and he held in his hand, pressed against his breast, the same shiny water-

proof hat beneath which he drove the 'bus.

"Left your last place long?" asked Lumme of this apparition.

"Gave 'em notice this arternoon, sir," said Halfred.

"Who were you with?"

"London General," replied Halfred.

"A London general?" said Teddy. "Sounds all right. He gave you a good character, I suppose?"

"The very best," I interposed.

"Well," said Lumme dubiously, "I hope you'll turn out all right and do my friend, the Monsieur here, credit."

As he turned to go he added to me aside—

"Rum-looking chap he seems to me. Keep an eye on him I'd advise you. Personally I'd have chosen Mingle, but o' course you know best. Good night."

And I was left with the faithful Halfred.

IV.

"I often envy the snail. Mon Dieu, think of always travelling beneath the comfortable roof of one's own house!"—*Maxime Argon.*

And now I must tell you something about my rooms, the little ledge in London on which I rested and flapped my wings and preened my feathers. The door of the house rented by Mr and Mrs Titch, and disposed of piecemeal to unmarried gentlemen, looked upon a very tiny square opening off a busy street. But my two chambers were at the back, and from their windows I saw nothing

of square or street or any house at all. The green Hyde Park with its trees and grass, and the wide drive where carriages and people aired themselves and lingered, that was what I saw; and often I could fancy myself in the woods and the gardens about a certain house in another land, and then I would shut my eyes and let the picture grow and grow till I could hear known voices and

look upon old faces that perhaps I should never again hear or see in any other fashion. Yes, the exile may be very gay, and jingle the foreign coins in his pocket, and whistle the airs of alien songs, and afterwards write humorously of his adventures; but there are many moments when he and the canary in the cage are very near together.

For myself, I am best, my friends say, when I am laughing at the world and playing in somewhat the buffoon. And of course I am naturally anxious to appear at my best. Besides, I must confess that I do not think this world is an affair to be treated with a too great gravity; not at least if one can help it. Frequently it makes itself ridiculous even in the partial eyes of its own inhabitants. How much more frequently if one could sit outside—upon a passing shower, for instance—and see it as we look upon a play! Ten to one, some of our most sententious friends would seem no different from those amusing sparrows discussing the law of property in a breadcrumb, or from my dog playing the solemn comedy of the buried bone. Therefore I always think it safer to assume that there is some unseen cynic, some creature in the fourth dimension, looking over my shoulder as I write and exclaiming when I grow too sensible, “Oh, the wise fool!”

Yet, for all this excellent philosophy, and in spite of a most reasonable desire to say those things that are instantly

rewarded by a smile, rather than those an audience receives in silence and perhaps approves, perhaps condemns,—despite all this, the rubbing of the world upon a set of nerves does not always make one merry, and in this humour I should sometimes like to perpetrate a serious sentence.

If ever I succumb in this temptation of the writer's Devil, please turn the page, and do not linger over the indiscretion.

Therefore I shall pass quickly over the thin ice of sentiment, the days when I felt lonely on my comfortable ledge, the hours I spent looking at the fire. More amusing to tell you of the bright lining to my clouds; of my sitting-room, for instance, low in the ceiling, commodious, and shaped, I think, to fit the chimneys, or the stairs, or the water-butt outside—at any rate to suit something that required two unequal recesses or three non-rectangular corners. It was on the ground-floor, and had two French windows (of which the adjective cheered me, I think, as much as the noun). They opened upon a little stone-paved space, shaded by a high tree in the park, and this I called my garden.

Rejecting some articles of my landlord's furniture as too splendid for an untitled tenant,—a plush-covered settee, for instance, and an alabaster tea-table covered with cut-glass trophies from the drawing-room of a bankrupt alderman,—I replaced them by a book-case, three easy-chairs, and an inviting sofa of my own; I

bought substitutes for the engravings of "The Child's First Prayer" and "The Last Kiss," and for the coloured plates representing idyllic passages from the lives of honest artisans, which had regaled my predecessor; I recurtained the dear French windows.

Neither Mr Titch nor his good wife entirely approved of these changes. In fact, I suspect they would have given such a Goth notice to quit in a month had it not been for the reflection that, after all, such eccentricities were only to be expected of a foreigner. The English have a most amusing contempt for the rest of mankind, accompanied by an equally amusing toleration for the peculiarities that are naturally associated with such degenerates. The Chinese, I understand, have an equal national modesty, but their contempt for the foreigner finds expression in a desire to decapitate his mangled remains. John Bull, on the other hand, will not only allow but expect you to walk upon your head, eat rats and mice, maintain a staff of poisonous serpents, and even play the barrel-organ. This goes to such a length that, supposing you beat him at something he most prides himself upon,—such as rowing, boxing, or manufactures,—he will but smile and shake his head and say, "These are, indeed, most remarkable animals."

Mr and Mrs Titch were no exceptions to this rule, and I think that in time they even came to have an affection for, and a pride in, their prepos-

terous tenant, much like an enthusiastic savant who contentedly handicaps himself with a half-tamed cobra.

Mr Titch was a little grey-haired man with a respectful manner overlaid upon a consequential air. He had enjoyed a varied experience as footman and butler in several families of distinction, and my Halfred had been but a short time in the house before he became tremendously impressed by Mr Titch's reminiscences of the great, and his vast knowledge of Halfred's own profession.

"Wonderful man, Mr Titch, sir!" he would say to me. "What he don't know about our English haristocracy ain't worth knowing. You'd 'ardly believe it, sir; but he see'd the Dook of Balham puttin' his arm round Lady Sarah Elcey's waist three months before their engagement was in the papers, and the Dook 'e says to 'im, 'Titch,' says he, 'ere's a five-poun' note; you're a man of discretion, you are, and what you sees you keeps to yourself, don't you? I mean no 'arm,' he says; 'I'll undertake to marry the lady if you only gives me time.' And Mr Titch, he lay low three 'ole months a-knowing a secret like that."

Mr Titch's cautions and advice were certainly serviceable to Halfred, who was rapidly becoming transformed from the cheerful 'bus-driver into the obliging valet. Whether the world did not lose more than I gained by this change I shall not undertake to say; but I can at least console

myself for depriving society of a friend, and Halfred of his "hinderpendence," by picturing the little man, poorly protected by his nondescript rug, driving his 'bus all day through the wind and the rain. He at least enjoyed the transformation; and one result is worth a hundred admirable theories. Besides, the virtues of Halfred remained the virtues of Halfred through all the polishings of circumstance and Mr Titch.

For the good Mrs Titch my deserving servant expressed a respect only a shade less profound than his homage to her spouse. Now this excellent lady, though motherly in appearance and wonderfully dignified in the black silk in which she rustled to church of a Sunday, was not remarkable either for acuteness of mind or that wide knowledge of the world enjoyed by Mr Titch. She knew little of the aristocracy except through his reminiscences, though I am bound to say her respect for that august institution was as profound as Major Pendennis himself could have desired. Also her observations on that portion of the world she had met were distinguished by an erroneous and solemn foolishness that cannot have passed unnoticed by Halfred. Yet he quoted and revered her with an inexplicable lack of discrimination.

"Mrs Titch is what I call, sir, a genuwine lady in a 'umble sphere," he once remarked to me. "Her deliciocy is surprisin'."

Yes, there must be some

mysterious glamour about these worthy people, and this glamour, I began to have dark suspicions, was none other than Miss Aramatilda Titch, daughter of the ex-butler and his genuine lady. At first I saw this maiden seldom, and then only by glimpses. As more than one of these revealed her in curl-papers, and as I do not appreciate woman thus decked out, I paid her but little attention. But after a week or two had passed I surprised her one afternoon conversing in my sitting-room with the affable Halfred.

"Miss Titch is a-lookin' to see if the windows wants cleanin'," he explained; though, as they were standing in the recess farthest removed from the windows, I came to the conclusion that other matters also were being discussed.

It was about this time that I had hired a piano to console my solitude, and a day or two later as I came towards my room I heard a tinkle of music. Pushing the door gently open, I saw Miss Aramatilda picking out the air of a polka, and Halfred listening to this melody with the most undisguised admiration.

This time his explanation was more lamely delivered, while Aramatilda showed the liveliest confusion and dismay.

"My dear Miss Titch," I assured her, "by all means practise my piano while I am out—provided of course that Mr Winkes gives you permission. She asked you, no doubt, if she might play it, Halfred?"

This did not diminish their confusion, I am afraid, and after that their concerts were better protected against surprise.

Not that I should have objected very strongly to take Halfred's place as audience one day, for these further opportunities of seeing Miss Titch roused in me some sympathy for my valet.

Aramatilda was undoubtedly attractive, with her hair freed from a too severe restraint; a plump, brown-eyed young woman, smiling in the most engaging fashion when politely addressed. Indeed I should have addressed her more frequently, had not Halfred shown such evident interest in her himself. In these matters I have always held it better that master and man should be separately apportioned.

There remains but one other inhabitant of this house who comes into my story, and that was a certain old gentleman living in the rooms immediately over mine. In fact, we two were the only lodgers, and so, having few friends as yet, I began to feel some interest in him.

I had heard him referred to always as "the General," and the few glimpses I had had of him confirmed this title. Figure to yourself an erect man of middle height, white moustached, quick in his step, with an eye essentially military—that is to say, expressionless in repose, keen when aroused; and do you not allow that if he is not a General, he at least ought to be?

"Who is this General?" I asked Halfred one day.

"As rummy a old customer as ever was, sir," said Halfred. "Been here three years, and never 'ad a visitor inside his room all that time, exceptin' one lady."

"A lady?" I said. "His——?"

"Don't know, sir. Some says one thing, some says another. Kind o' a hexotic I calls 'im, sir. Miss Titch, she thinks he's 'ad a affair of the 'eart; I thinks he booses, same as a old pal o' mine what kept a chemist's shop in Stepney used to. My friend he locks 'isself up in the back-room and puts away morphine and nicotine and strychnine and them things by the 'alf-pint. 'Ole days at it he were, sir, and all the time the small boys a-sneaking cough-drops and tooth-brushes for to make feathers for their 'ats when playin' at soldiers; and when the doctor he sees 'im at last, he says nothing but a hepileptic 'ome wouldn't do 'im no good."

"You think that the General drinks?" I said.

"Either that or else makes counterfeit coins, sir," said Halfred with an ominous shake of his bullet head.

I was quite aware of my Halfred's partiality for the melodramatic. Nevertheless, there was certainly something unusual in my neighbour's conduct that excited my interest considerably. For I confess I am one of those who are apt to be blind towards the mysteries of the obvious and the miracles of every day, and to revel in the romance of the singular.

V.

"Seek you wine, or seek you maid at the journey's end?
Give to me at every stage the welcome of a friend!"

—*Cyd.*

Do not think that all this time I had lost sight of my new friends, the fair-haired Dick Shafthead and the genial Teddy Lumme. On the contrary, we had had more than one merry night together, and exchanged not a few confidences. Very soon after I was settled Dick had come round to my rooms and criticised everything from Halfred to the curtains. His tastes were a trifle too austere to appreciate altogether these latter rather sumptuous hangings.

"They'll do for waistcoats, if you ever go on the music-hall stage," he observed sardonically. "That's why you got 'em, perhaps?"

"The very reason, my friend," I replied. "I cannot afford to get both new waistcoats and new curtains; just as I am compelled to employ the same persons to get me out of jail and criticise my furniture."

Dick laughed. "You are too witty, Mossyours." (He came as near the pronunciation of my title as that.) "You should write some of these things down before you forget 'em."

"For the French," I retorted, "that precaution is unnecessary."

For Halfred, I am sorry to say, he did not at first show that appreciation I had expected. "Your 'bus-man" was the epithet he applied behind his

back; though I am bound to say his good-breeding made him so polite that Halfred on his side conceived the highest opinion of my friend.

"A real gentleman Mr Shafthead is, sir," he confided to me. "What I calls a hummistakable toff. He hasn't got no side on, and he speaks to one man like as he would to another. In fact, sir, he reminds me of Lord Haugustus I once seed at the Hadelphi,—a nobleman what said, 'I treats hevery fellow-Briton as a gentleman so long as Britannia rules the waves, and he behaves hisself accordingly.'"

This may sound exaggerated praise, but indeed it would be difficult to exaggerate my dear Dick's virtues. Doubtless his faults are being placed in the opposite page of a ledger kept somewhere with his name upon the cover; but that is no business of mine. To paste in parallel columns the virtues of our friends and the faults of ourselves—that may be unpleasant, but it is necessary if we are to turn the searchlight inwards. Certain weak spots we must not look at too closely if we are to keep our self-respect; but, my faith! we can well give the best of our humanity an airing now and then; also, if possible, a fumigating. It was Dick Shafthead more than any other who took my failings for a walk

in the sunshine, and somehow or other they always returned a little abashed.

A very different person was his cousin Teddy Lumme, for whom, by the way, I discovered Dick had a real regard, carefully concealed behind a most satirical attitude. Teddy was not clever—though shrewd enough within strict limits; he was no moralist, no philosopher; an observer chiefly of the things least worth observing; a performer upon the tin whistle of life. Yet, owing to his kindness of heart and ingenuous disposition, he was wonderfully likable.

His leisure moments were spent, I believe, in the discharge of some duty in the Foreign Office; though what precisely it was I could never, even by the most ingenious cross-examination, discover. His father held the respectable position of Bishop of Battersea; his mother was the Honourable Mrs Lumme. These excellent parents had a high regard for Teddy, whom they considered likely to make his mark in the world.

I was taken to the Bishopric (*sic*), and discussed with the most venerable Lumme, senior, many points of interest to a foreigner.

“Note of a Conversation with Bishop of Battersea, taken down from memory a few days after.

Myself. What is the difference between a High Church and a Low Church?

Bishop. A High Church has a high conception of its duties

towards mankind, religion, the apostolic succession, and the costume of its clergymen. A Low Church has the opposite.

M. Are you Low Church?

B. No.

M. I understand that the conversion of the Pope is one of your objects. Is that so?

B. Should the Pope approach us in the proper spirit, we should certainly be willing to admit him into our fold.

M. Have you written many theological works?

B. I believe tea is ready.

Afterwards further discussion on tithes, doctrines, and the Thirty-nine Articles, of which I forget the details.”

My friend Teddy did not live at the Bishopric with his parents, but in exceedingly well-appointed chambers near St James Street. Here I met various other young gentlemen of fortune and promise, who discussed with me many questions of interest, such as the price of champagne in foreign hotels, the status of the music-hall artist at home and abroad, the best knot for the full-dress tie, and so forth. Dick Shaft-head did not often appear in this company.

“Can’t afford their amusements, and can’t be bothered with their conversation,” he explained to me. “Look in and have a pipe this evening if you’re doing nothing else. If you want cigars, bring your own; I’ve run out.”

And, after all, learning to perform upon the brier pipe in Dick’s society under the old roof of the Temple, applauding

or disapproving of our elders and our betters, had infinitely more charm to me than those intellectual conclaves at his cousin's—for six nights in the week at least. A different mood, a different friend. Sometimes one desires in a companion congenial depravity; at others, more points of contact.

This "Temple" where Dick lived is not a church, though there is a church within it. It is one of those surprising secrets that London keeps and shows you sometimes to reconcile you to her fogs. Out of the heart of the traffic and the noise you turn through an ancient archway into a rabbit-warren of venerable and sober red buildings, each court and passage tidy, sedate, and, if I may say it of a personage of brick, thoughtful and kindly disposed to its inhabitants. This is the Temple, once the home of the Knights Templar, now of English law. In one court Dick shared with a friend an austere furnished office, where he received such work as the solicitors sent him, and was ready to receive more. But it was on the top flight of another staircase in another courtyard that he kept his household gods.

He had come there, as I have said before, during a period of financial depression, and there he had stayed ever since. I do not wonder at it, though, to be sure, I should find it rather solitary of an evening: when the offices emptied silence fell upon the stairs and quadrangles, and there was left in the whole vast warren only the sprinkling of permanent inhabitants who dwelt under the slates. Yet there was, I know not quite what, about those old rooms, an aroma of the past, a link with romance, that made them lovable. The panelled walls, the undulating floors, the odd angle which held the fireplace, the beam across the ceiling, old furniture to match these, all had character; and to what but character do we link sentiment?

Also the prospect from the windows was delightful: an open court, a few trees, the angles of other ancient buildings, a glimpse of green turf in a garden, a peep of more stems and branches with the Thames beyond. Yes, it was quite the neighbourhood for a romantic episode to happen. And one day, as you shall hear in time, it did happen.

(To be continued.)

SAPPHO'S LAST SONG.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

NIGHT, restful night, and the declining moon's
Wan bashful rays, and thou, that gleamest through
The fringe of silent woodland on the cliff,
Day's harbinger! how very sweet and dear
These sights were to mine eyes, while yet to me
Fate and the dread Erinnyes were unknown!
Now gentle sounds and sights to my despair,
Lovelorn, bring no delight. I feel a joy,
A joy, that never heretofore I felt,
When, wild careering through the liquid air,
And o'er the quaking plains, the South wind blast
Sweeps storms of blinding dust, and when the car,
The ponderous car of Jove, loud thundering,
High o'er our heads, rends the sky's murky pall;
It gives me joy, 'mong storm-tost clouds to float
O'er headlands grim, and chasms immersed in gloom,
To see the panic flight of herds, and hear
The torrent smite its banks with sounding thud,
And the triumphant rage of the resistless flood.

Fair is thy vesture, O thou sky divine,
And fair, O dewy earth, art thou! Alas!
No share of all this beauty have the Gods
And cruel fate to luckless Sappho given.
To thy proud realms, to all thy beauteous forms,
O Nature, I, an outcast, vile, despised
By him I love, my heart and pleading eyes
Turn all in vain. Joy there is none for me
In sunny meads, or in the maiden flush
Of dawn forth issuing from the gates of heaven;
Me not the song of plumaged birds delights,
Nor the soft murmuring of the beech-tree leaves;
And where the shimmering stream beneath the shade
Of willows drooping to receive her kiss
Unbares her spotless bosom, from my foot
Her winding current she withdraws in scorn,
Flies through her fragrant banks, and leaves me all forlorn.

What deadly fault, what infamy profane
Polluted me ere I was born, that heaven
And fortune both should frown upon me thus?
How sinn'd I as a child, sinn'd at a time
When life is ignorant of all misdeed,
That the fair scheme and blossoms of my youth
Should thus be blighted, that my iron thread
Round the relentless Parca's spindle should
Be whirled in such sad wise? Rashly the words
Fell from my lips! Mysterious counsels sway
The destinies of things. 'Tis mystery all,
All save our sorrows here. A race unblest
We are, to affliction born; and wherefore so
Lies in the lap of the Celestials.
Ah me! the longings, aspirations, hopes,
Of days when we were young! The all-ruling Sire,
The Powers Eternal dower'd mankind with all
The dreams, the illusions that appeared so fair.
A man in manly enterprise may shine,
Be rich in storied verse, divine in song,
Yet, poorly clad, will pass unnoted by the throng.
Then let me die. Its veil ignoble doff'd,
The naked soul to Dis will wing its flight,
And mend the cruel blunder of the blind
Dispenser of events. And thou, to whom
Long bootless love, unswerving constancy,
And the vain frenzy of unslaked desire
Bound me, live happy! If e'er mortal man
On earth lived happily! Me Jove did not
With the sweet juice besprinkle from the vase
That of its balm is niggard, when the dreams
And fond delusions of my girlish days
Died out. The first to flee away are all
The days that are the brightest of our life;
Then come disease, old age, and icy death's
Dark shadow, and to hope's triumphant dreams,
And cherish'd fancies, Tartarus succeeds;
And genius, erst so vaunting, sinks, the prey
Of her that over Hades reigns supreme,
Of black unending night, and Acheron's silent stream!

ST BRIGID'S FLOOD.¹

FOUR or five men were gathered together that evening in Forsyth's rooms, talking the usual talk of anglers when they congregate—flies, baits, good days, bad days, droughts, and floods. Forsyth was just expressing his preference for the extreme type of flood river,—

"A regular mountain stream, you know—no lake on it, no feeders to speak of, but just the scourings of the hills. When it comes down, there's no need to bother about waiting till it clears: you watch till it stops rising, and then fish at once; and some time or other while you're on the water you're pretty sure to hit the psychological moment."

"Yes; but how long does it last?" put in Legge.

"Oh, an hour, two hours, six hours. But it's amusing, anyhow, to watch the water changing; it keeps up the interest—it's dramatic. I've seen a stream at Carrick get up five feet in the night, and go down to where it was in the course of the forenoon."

"If you come to that," said Grayson, knocking his pipe on the mantelpiece, "I've seen a flood get up about five feet in five minutes."

Grayson was a man none of us had seen before. Forsyth had picked him up somewhere in Ireland. So, although what he said sounded pretty steep, none of us hooted.

"You mean a tide wave," Legge suggested politely.

"Not in the least; just a flood out of the mountains like what Forsyth talks of. And if you like them dramatic, Forsyth, you'd have had your heart's content that time."

"Well," said Forsyth, "I know they get the devil's own floods in the west of Ireland; but I don't see how that could have happened in the natural order of things."

"I don't say that it did," answered Grayson; "and anyhow, there were a good many people thought it didn't. They thought exactly as you say—that it was the devil's own flood, or, to be quite accurate, the work of St Brigid, if you ever heard of her."

"No," said Forsyth; "but expound."

"Well," said Grayson, as he filled his pipe and settled down to narrative, "I'm not strong on saints; but St Brigid has a lot of sacred places all through Ireland, and just up near Killala there's a well that she's supposed to have blessed. I was staying on the other side of the country at a place called Teelin, in the direction of Blacksod, where I had leave to fish the Bunlin river. It was a pretty wild place, I tell you, in those days; for the nearest rail was thirty miles off, and there weren't many of the amenities of life at the

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inn. The fishing was no good either; for the place was a regular nest of poachers, and they had scooped out nearly every fish that was in the pools, so far as I could hear or see. I would have chucked it, only for a ruffian there that I made friends with—head and front of all the poachers of the district, by his own story; but he gillied for me in the daytime, and used to show me outlying streams where I got some sport. And he swore to me by all his gods that the weather was making up for a big flood, and then there would be great fishing in the Bunlin. Besides, he was very good company; so I stayed.

"I liked the people too, and I had got pretty friendly with them, though they didn't much care for strangers. You see, the only strangers who ever came there were sporting tourists, and interfered with peaceable poaching: there wasn't much to bring any one else. My word! but it was a desolate place. Great brown moors sloping down off mountains that had no particular shape, and running into great brown wastes of bog that stretched away out towards the sea. One hadn't even the comfort of looking out to the ocean horizon, for there is a kind of low neck of land that runs between that country and the Atlantic. So one saw nothing on earth but brown shapeless bog and heather in all directions: just a little tillage along the river, but practically a bare wilderness of bog. And the valley of the river, so far as

my fishing went, ran pretty straight east and west. It had no surprises or nooks or little prettinesses about it, but was just as broad and bare as a valley can be. Only, up at the boundary of my water, it took a sharp turn, and the river was jammed up tight in a winding cleft. Dan, my poacher friend, was always talking to me about the splendid pool there was just above here; and one day when we were doing no good at all, I left him my rod—he was always mad keen to be fishing himself—and walked up to look at it.

"He said I couldn't miss it, and neither I could. When I got to the bridge—for I had struck back to the road—I could hear the rush of the little fall about fifty yards down, and I walked to it. The river came at an angle to the fall, and then it had a straight swift course of about a hundred yards in a deep confined channel. That day there was a lovely run at the head of it, but in any kind of flood the tail of the pool would be the chance. The place was a regular gorge. I walked down the right bank, which was just a handy height for fishing, but the other was a kind of cliff—you could see the track going up and down it like a sheep-run. At the end of the pool the sides of the gorge narrowed in again, so that I don't suppose the water was thirty feet across; but just there, on the far side, the cliff drew back from the bank, and right in by the river was a cottage, a good bit better-looking

than most of them. I would have thought it must belong to a keeper, only that on my side there was a watcher's hut built of scraws of turf, and presumably put there to observe the man on the spot. I remember thinking as I looked at it that I wouldn't mind being the man on the spot, if I had a rod on the water, for the site was charming. The cottage was regularly in the arms of the hill; and it faced down the valley about south-west, with its gable-end to the river, protected from the westerly draught up the valley by a little knoll. He was probably a 'well-doing' man, too, for just below this kind of gully the river curved to the right, and there were a dozen acres or so of fairly level ground between the left bank and the hills. All this was down in crops, cut up with stone walls, and there was only one other cottage near by—a much poorer one, too—so he probably held most of it. You see, I was taking stock of the place against the time when I should be a tenant.

"All the same, I should probably have forgotten most of the details. Only, fancy, one's memory is a sort of sensitive plate which takes impressions, but they sink gradually in, and fade into a blur, unless something fixes them. Well, in this case I had the lines bitten in, pretty hard, just afterwards, in a way that stamped in my mind the position of that cottage, and the fact that the man had only one near neighbour. Just in the same way I am not likely to forget what otherwise would have faded away in a few days

or weeks or months: the look of a fellow who came out of the cottage-door and stared across at me—a big, burly, dark-complexioned ruffian. I said to myself at once, 'That man's been in America.' You know the type, Forsyth—rather aggressive. 'I'm as good as you anyway'—that sort of air. He was clean-shaven, too; that was another mark, for the men there all wear the beard, or else the old-fashioned scrap of whisker. Well, I went on downstream, and never gave him another thought; but the whole thing came back on me in a flash when I saw him again—lying quiet enough. That was the time when the first picture got bitten in, and fixed by the later occurrence which gave it significance.

"Just in the same way I shall always remember noticing an unusual feature in the landscape—a great massive outcrop of rock on the mountain-side straight above the cottage. It broke the featureless character of the hills, and there was a big patch of orange lichen on it that caught the sun finely, and it was good to look at. But especially I noticed it because it set me thinking of a man called Bowen, a sort of professor who used to fish with me, and do a lot of geologising and botanising on off-days. He would have been bound to invent some theory to explain why that great lump stayed there sticking out, while all the hill-slopes about were being pared off smooth. And afterwards, when the event happened, I wrote to him to come and look at geology

in the making, but he was in the Andes or somewhere. Only, it wouldn't have done for him to theorise in Teelin about what happened. Everybody in Teelin is very clear that if the rock was there, it was put there with a purpose.

"However, of course, the day I was up there, I was thinking of nothing, except that the pool was a splendid holding pool, and that a man might possibly kill fish in it even in low water, and that it probably wasn't swept out with nets, and probably all mine were. At all events, Dan wasn't able to stir anything in them, any more than I could. But he said the weather was going to break, and he was right enough.

"It was the night before the 27th of August when it broke with a lot of thunder and rain, and in the morning it was bright again; but the river was still rising, or anyhow not falling. I went out and fished for a bit, waiting for the psychological moment that Forsyth talks about; but Dan said there was more water to come and the fish wouldn't rise, though they were up from the sea, for I saw them moving. By about four o'clock it came on such a downpour as I hardly ever was out in, and the day blackened and grew cold. You never saw anything so forsaken as that valley looked in the drift of water and smother of grey cloud. I went in, and while I was changing, it broke into thunder again—the kind of thunder when you hear the sky torn across with a rip just over your head, and the light-

ning makes you blink. In that sort of storm human beings are just like animals, they always drift together—and I was a human being, so I went downstairs into the little shop. You know the kind of place—a clay floor between two counters: one counter is the bar, which is slopped over with stale porter; the other is the shop, where they sell damp matches, and envelopes gummed together, and tea and biscuits, and every necessary of life in its least attractive form: and the whole place reeks of porter and paraffin, and bacon, and several other fragrances, and there is a window looking on to the street, hermetically closed.

"The entire household was there of course. Michael Flynn, the big chap who kept the hotel, was behind the bar. He wore a Newgate fringe, not very much bristlier than his eyebrows: his son was rummaging for something in a dark corner, and the two girls were at the shop counter. Dan, my gillie, was discoursing to Flynn across the bar with a couple of other worthies; and there was a woman sitting in the only chair, with her hands crossed on a parcel in her lap and her head down. She had evidently come in from the country for shopping and been weather-bound, and at the first look I thought she was in a bad fright. Anyhow, she was perfectly silent, but her lips were moving all the time. The two girls were giggling rather nervously.

"I was feeling rather divided in my mind about this flood, for it seemed as if my luck was

to come at the expense of a lot of poor people. I expected to hear talk of nothing but the desperate damage to the oats—which, of course, were being laid as flat as a board. But, to my surprise, the only thing that the men were discussing was the effect upon a sort of pious picnic—the excursion to a station at the Holy Well. ‘There was three cartloads of them went through here this morning about eight o’clock,’ Michael Flynn said, ‘and one girl with a bad cough on her this while back.’ ‘Faith,’ said Dan, ‘maybe she would have been better in her bed a day like this.’ But Flynn was a very devout man, and he would not hear of this. ‘Well, now, I always heard it for a fact that there was never any one yet that went to that well in a right mind, and did what was set down for to be done, but they were the better of going—saving always,’ he said, looking sharp at the strange woman, who was sitting mumbling to herself, ‘that they would ask something not fit to be granted.’

“I made a note, after my habit, to ask Dan for some explanation of this remark at a more convenient season. Just then, before any more could be said, we heard feet running down the road, the door was thrown open, and three men stepped in: the rain streaming off them made pools on the floor. The moment they spoke it was plain they belonged to another county, and I said to Dan, ‘Who are they?’ ‘Three Highlanders out of Donegal working on a con-

thraak,’ he told me. The last of them to enter was one of the most powerful human beings I ever looked at—very tall and rather gaunt, with a small head and a jaw like a pike’s: high cheekbones, forehead dented in, and small deep-set eyes. In spite of its ruggedness, though, the face was pleasant, a queer mixture of good-humour and possible ferocity. They stood there in a group dripping in the doorway, a little shy; and behind them was the strange unnatural darkness of the evening—darker than it would have been most days at eight o’clock.

“‘God save us all, Neil,’ said Mick Flynn, speaking to the big man, ‘what kind of weather is that to be taking the road in? Is it from Mike O’Hanlon’s you’re coming?’

“‘We thought it was quieter out of doors nor in,’ the man answered, with a twinkle in his eye. Then he caught sight of the woman sitting there, and turned away from Flynn. ‘That’s a wild evening, Mrs O’Hea,’ he said.

“Obviously he didn’t want to talk; but there was a quick-eyed little fellow with him who was ready enough, and I saw Dan making up to him with a question. ‘Was there any quarrel between yez and the O’Hanlons?’

“‘There was quarrel enough, then, if Neil M’Nelis was as brave as he’s big,’ the little man said, spitting viciously on the ground. ‘But he’s that cautious like, he was afeard of killing Johnny O’Hanlon. Wasn’t that what he told us,

William?' he asked, turning to the other Donegal man.

"The big fellow interrupted before he could get an answer. 'Bad luck to my tongue, then, if I told you what was not to be repeated, Ned M'Cormick. And if there was any trouble at all, wasn't it because you were for ever threeping it to Johnny O'Hanlon that I could beat him with a hand tied behind me? An' right well I know the kind of him, that if there was to be a fight, he's not the one that would quet it in a hurry. An' the drink was in him at the time he spoke.'

"Well, now,' said Michael Flynn in his judicial way, 'take my word for it, Neil, you done right. If it was in Mike O'Hanlon's house you were, and he seen any kind of fight and his brother getting worsted, he'd not stay looking.'

"An' if you beat the two of them,' Dan put in, 'the O'Hanlons are a terrible strong clan, and they'd keep it up on you as long as you were in this country.'

"Well,' said the big man, 'if Johnny O'Hanlon was looking help, he needn't go far to look it this day. There was half the O'Hanlons in the country-side in Mike's house before we quet.'

"Ay, troth,' said Ned M'Cormick, 'and great diversion with them. There was Mike himself and the wife and four childer—that's six; and there was Johnny O'Hanlon that came in middling cheerful from the station at Killala, and Black Peter Maloney with

him, and his wife, that's Michael's sister—that's nine now; an' a couple more of them, cousins, Tim O'Hanlon and his wife, that came running in out of the rain from off the road—that's eleven.'

"Ay,' said the other Donegal man, 'and the fiddler with them that was making down here for Teelin against the fair. An' they had him up in the corner playin' for them to dance, before Johnny began to strip and square up at Neil thonder.'

"Lord save us! such a houseful,' said Mick Flynn; 'twelve of them, and the three of you.'

"Faith there was one more, or the ninth part of one,' said Ned M'Cormick. 'For Michael had the tailor in with him making a new coat for the fair.' Then he turned to the woman that was sitting there, and he had a malicious little look in his eyes. I had noticed she had stopped mumbling to herself, and was listening very intently. The little fellow had noticed her too, but he made-believe to be just catching sight of her.

"Och, and is that yourself, Mrs O'Hea? Troth, then, Michael was talking of you: for he says to the tailor, God help you if the coat's not everything it ought to be. I'm for the fair at Teelin, and I'm bound to meet my sweetheart, Biddy O'Hea, and I'd like to be lookin' my best.'

"She was an oldish woman, about fifty I daresay, with a large plain round face; and her face itself didn't change much. But the whole of her body shook and bent together as she sat, and her fingers

crisped themselves in a spasm of rage; and she spoke, but the words came so fast and broken that I couldn't hear what she was saying: only it was plain enough it wasn't sweet to hear.

"But M'Nelis took the little fellow by the shoulder and swung him round towards the door. 'Bad luck to you for a spiteful wee divil!' said he. 'Sure, Mrs O'Hea, don't mind his talk.'

"But she got up and she gathered her shawl round herself and her parcel, with hands still shaking violently, and she began to speak, in the sing-song voice, like a chant, that Irish country people often fall into when they are in a passion.

"'Twas on St Brigid's day I put my curse on Mike O'Hanlon and all that belongs to him and draws breath in his house. May the breath choke in their throats! was the word I said, and I went to St Brigid's own water to say it. An' to-day there's a station at the well, and the whole of the O'Hanlons is gathered under one roof, and them dancing and singing. An' my curse is on them, an' them dancing and singing.'

"There wasn't one of us that said a word, and for my own part I was what they call in my country 'touched under.' There's a lot of sound physiological observation in that phrase, if you think of it. She went across to the door, and, just as she had it open, she turned and said to M'Nelis, 'How many was in the O'Hanlon's house when you left it?' Then the door shut on her, and there was dead silence again,

till one of the girls spoke with a frightened titter—

"'Lord save us! that's an awful woman.'

"'She's a bloody witch,' snapped out little M'Cormick, who had turned a sort of green.

"'Mind you how quick she was to reckon out the thirteen,' said Mick Flynn reflectively. 'Eleven O'Hanlons and the fiddler and the tailor. An' not one of us here or there noticed it.'

"'Is it them notice it?' Dan struck in; 'sure Michael would not value it a snuff of a candle if he knew. What does he care about the like of that? Just the very same as he cares about Biddy O'Hea and her curses. Hasn't he heard her curse him like that a hundher times? And doesn't he see her stand at the door of her cottage cursing him, and him going out in the morning and coming in at night.'

"'Well and well. Still and all, it's a wild evening, and I'm thinking, M'Nelis, maybe coming out of that was the best thing ever you did. Come now, boys, a glass of whisky to put us in better heart.'

"The thunder by this was growling away in the distance, the rain had slackened a bit, and I was mighty curious about all this. What was even more important, I didn't want my gillie to go on the burst, with the river just coming into order. So after one glass I hauled the reluctant Dan out with me to look at the river, knowing that if I got him as far as the bridge I could speed

him on to Mrs Dan with some remnants of my half-crown in his pocket.

"The hotel—as they call it—stands where the main road up and down the valley is met at right angles by another making straight for the bridge, at which my fishing started. It was clearing a bit seawards, and the main rack of cloud came that way from the south-west. But up the valley, in among the hills, it looked wilder than ever: there was simply a black mass of vapour, twisted into queer shapes, apparently with a strong swirl from the east coming up against the general drift. Dan looked up at it.

"'Begor! Biddy O'Hea will get a cooling for her anger before she's gone far. Wouldn't you think the sky was going to fall? 'Twill be down on top of her before she gets to Dohoomiss Bridge.'

"'Is it up there she lives?'

I said.

"'You know the long pool you were looking at. Well, just a piece below that.'

"I thought for a moment he meant the cottage I had my eye on, opposite the watcher's hut, and said so.

"'No, sir,' said Dan; 'that's where her enemy lives—O'Hanlon.' Then I began to understand.

"'A big, black, clean-shaven fellow?' I said.

"'That's the very man. You seen him up there? Well, you might notice Biddy's cottage away back a bit in the hill. The right way to it would be past O'Hanlon's; but he has a wicked dog there, and Biddy has

a track now made for herself over the mountain. Och, yes,'—for I asked him the obvious question,—'but what can the craythur do? She's a widdy woman with a weak family of girls, an' she got bad usage from Mick O'Hanlon first and last.'

"I asked him what they fell out about. 'It was about some geese,' said Dan, seeming to think that a final explanation. When I pressed for more details, it seemed that O'Hanlon said that she had stolen his and sold them, or she said that he had stolen hers, I forget which. Anyhow, Dan thought that the geese had been straying by the road and were just lifted by some of those fellows that go through, driving big flocks of them to market. Then O'Hanlon's cows got into her corn, and her cows got into his corn, and they accused one another of breaking down fences on purpose, and so it went on. I think maybe Dan was right, and there's no call to look for other reasons why those people should hate one another. In a town nobody has time to have enemies. It's only in the country that hatreds really ripen. You see a person going in and going out every day—he's part of the landscape almost—and every time you see him hate stirs in your belly. And you see few other people—hardly any one else in a case like this. Your enemy fills the whole field of your vision. Then there are always these little incidents of geese, and gaps, and the like of that; and

there's worse. His potatoes are growing near your potatoes and his corn near your corn, and either you rejoice to see his doing worse, or you hate him like hell because his are doing better. That's the way you get a really fine well-rooted specimen of hate, which gets its nurture daily and grows like a tree. Love and hatred are both of them very much a matter of proximity, and your neighbour is twice as much your neighbour in the country.

"Still, everywhere in Arcadia you have these sort of feuds, and they aren't explosive. They simply blacken a nature slowly, they don't result in act. But in this case there was another feud which might very well have passed over, only that it lay up against this hatred begotten of proximity, and was kept warm. There was a history—commonplace enough, but dramatic in the ordinary way. I got it out of Dan by cross-questioning.

"This fellow Mike O'Hanlon was always what Dan called a boyo: he was a poacher and a stiller of whisky, of course, but Dan thought little of that. Only he broke the laws that these people respected as well as the laws they did not: he neglected his duty at confession, and he was pretty miscellaneous in his sweet-hearting. You know, of course, the peculiarity of Irish Catholics: they don't like sexual irregularity; and the wilder and more outlandish a place is in Ireland, the fewer illegitimate births there are. It may be

temperament, tradition, training—I don't know which. But anyhow the fact is certain. A man who runs loose is counted irreligious and disapproved of, and a woman who makes a slip might nearly as well hang herself at once.

"Well, in the course of his adventures Mike O'Hanlon came across Biddy O'Hea, who was then Biddy something else, and she was a woman of strong will and a violent temper; and she wanted to marry Mike. But she had no fortune, and anyhow very likely he had no notion of settling down yet. Perhaps she counted on that. But what she did was to marry a very old man who held this little farm up by the long pool. I couldn't get anything clear about dates; but there were children born, and after some time there was a fierce quarrel between Mike O'Hanlon and his father, and the priest was mixed up in it, and Mike went off to America. The pretext was some trouble about the seizure of a still, when the police were assaulted and one man badly hurt, and it was thought that Mike might be wanted. But Dan seemed to think that the reason why there was not the usual evidence forthcoming to establish Mike's *alibi* was that Mike's father and the priest wanted him out of the country.

"After a while old O'Hanlon died, and Mike came back to take up the farm, and according to Dan his morals were none the better. America is a questionable school, and there was a fellow out of a very lawless parish that I knew,

who came back after a couple of years, saying he never seen wickedness right till he seen it in the streets of New York. The contact with civilisation is not always a success for primitive natures. As Dan put it, there was no Christianity left in Mike O'Hanlon. Well, when he came back, Biddy O'Hea's old man was dead, and the priest himself tried to make up a marriage. But, as Dan said, 'Faith, Michael was a good match now, and the wee house down by the pool was on the way to Biddy's, and there was a girl in it with a fortune of a hundher and fifty pound, and Mike carried his courting no further nor that.' So you may judge if the widow O'Hea was kindly disposed to her neighbours when Mike settled in there. And I would say that in the slanging matches the geese and the gaps and the rest of it figured principally as a pretext.

"I don't know when the public quarrelling began or how long it went on; these gatherings would only come once or twice a-year. Only it became recognised that whenever Mike O'Hanlon and Biddy O'Hea met in a fair, there would always be this sort of encounter. And, although O'Hanlon had the best of it for the rest of the year, and could always retort on her, and did, about her dirty little house and the weeds in her corn, and her starved-looking pony and so on, still, as Dan said, 'she had the tongue of him,' and public opinion was on her side. Well, I suppose the man wanted to silence her once and for all,

and he didn't care how he did it, for, as I tell you, there was no Christianity in him. At all events the crisis came when they met in Teelin at a market, and Dan was there and went up to listen. 'She joined on him at once,' he said, 'and maybe she didn't give him a dressing down. An' Mike stood there, with his back turned, letting on not to hear her, when all the while there was a ring of people round them, the same as there would be round a fight. "An'," says she at last, "I wouldn't put clean pigs to sleep with that dirty ugly lump of a woman you have, and them little red leprechauns of childer." An' at that Mike turned his head on his shoulder and says, "Well, there's two fine black-haired girls in your own house anyway, and proud I am of them; for it was little your ould crooked O'Hea had to do with the making of them." An' then he turned on her and laughed in her face, wicked-like. "Och, Biddy," says he, "don't be too hard on your old sweetheart." And when she heard that she turned the colour of that stone,' said Dan, striking on the bridge parapet, 'and you would have thought she was going to drop; but faith, not she. She up with her hands like that to the sky, and she prayed God the words might choke in the throat of him. But you heard her cursing him herself, and I needn't be telling you the way of it. And sure it was no wonder she would be mad, for what person at all would put up with a thing like that cast up

to them, let it be true or false? barring one that had no spirit at all in them.'

"'She doesn't want for spirit anyhow, if she faced a storm like this,' I said, looking up the valley. 'They're getting it heavy up there. I suppose now she won't mind seeing her own crops go if his are washed out?'

"The whole head of the valley was lost in a black welter of cloud, as if a curtain was dropped between us and it. Dan took out his pipe and spat hard,—

"'She's a desperate woman that. What did she do but make the whole journey in her bare feet to the Holy Well, and she said a station on him backwards: ay, the whole of it, the five Paternosters and the five Hail Marys, and the prayer to Saint Brigid herself: every one of them backwards, beginning at the Amen, and praying that she might get the thing she desired, and that was the death by suffocating of Mike O'Hanlon and all his family.'

"I remember the way Dan mouthed out the long words as if he enjoyed them, and I remember trying to say something in chaff about O'Hanlon's being in no danger of choking from drought, when Dan interrupted me. We were leaning both of us with our arms on the parapet of the bridge, looking up a long stretch they called the mill-pool, and automatically watching the water as it came tearing down—hardly discoloured at all, for there was no laboured land worth speaking of in the drainage. And

now suddenly Dan said to me in a puzzled way, 'The water's falling.'

"It sounded impossible; but sure enough at the ford, about fifty yards up, the break of a stone was showing. I looked up the valley: the sky was clearing, and for a minute I thought it had been only a local storm and the upper water got none of it. But the river was running down now like the sand in an hour-glass—'Be damned to me if ever I seen the like of that!' said Dan. Then he gave a shout, 'Oh, merciful Jesus, look there!' There was no need for him to point up the stream, I tell you. A great yellow mass came round the corner up above, and broke into the mill-pool. It spread a bit then, but still it came on in a regular wall fully a foot high, and thick and muddy. Dan stood staring; but I caught hold of him, 'Run, man! the bridge'll go.' It didn't go, though, but I've often thought since that if it had we might as well have been on top of it as watching the flood from the roadway. I'll never forget the roar of the water, ending in a sort of smack, as it came up against the masonry. There was a lot of stuff floating, of course; but only small things, till we saw a brownish mass coming down—it came at an awful pace. 'Here's a hayrick,' I said; but just as it reached the ford I suppose a rock met it, and it wallowed right over. There wasn't the least doubt about it, it was half the thatch of a house. Well, I don't think I'm superstitious; but the only difference between Dan and me

was that I said nothing and he spoke out. 'As sure as death,' he said, 'it's O'Hanlon's. The whole of them's drowned.'

"We started running back to the village when a thought struck me. 'Go you and give the alarm,' I said; 'I'm going up to Cudheen to see would there be anything there.'

"Cudheen was the name of a pool just above the mill-pool, and there was a tongue of gravel sticking out there: it was the sharpest bend on the river. I left Dan and ran across the fields; but when I got to the bank the stream had cut a new course for itself: the spit was gone, and instead of curving in by the left bank, it rushed straight down. Only it had gone down nearly as quick as it had risen, and on the gravel bank at my feet there was a man lying, with only his legs in the water. It was O'Hanlon right enough.

"I dragged him high and dry. There was no use trying to do anything. In a minute Dan and three or four other fellows were up with me. 'Lord save us!' was pretty much all they said. Then Dan spotted a thing I hadn't noticed. The coat was on the man, but twisted round the body, only one arm in the sleeve. And it was a half-made coat, just roughly stitched together.

"'Do you mind that? He was just trying it on when the flood took him. Boys, but it must have been sudden.'

"The more I thought of it the less I could understand what had happened. I told them to take the body up to

the roadside and into the village, and I started up the valley to see what had happened, on the off-chance of giving help. But I had no more doubt in my mind that Biddy O'Hea's curse had been fulfilled to the letter than any of the rest of them.

"I suppose it was about two miles up the road to the bridge, and we ran, or half ran, every step of the way. The rain was over, and it was clearer if anything than it had been; but still everything was that kind of blackish grey. About a mile up we took a short cut across a corner of hill, and as we got to the top of it I saw a woman along the road on our left. In a little, when she noticed us running, she began to run too. It was Biddy O'Hea. By the time we had got a little farther a car passed us, lashing and galloping, with the priest and the doctor in it, and there was a stream of people all along the road behind us; but I could see the old woman coming along at a kind of shuffling trot in front of them. It was wonderful how she kept up.

"Dan and I had caught hold of the back of the car, and were running with it, and in another couple of minutes we turned the corner—and then we saw what had happened. Biddy O'Hea's cottage was in sight plain enough, O'Hanlon's would be hidden by the ground in any case; but there was a long brown scar down the hillside just above it. Dan shouted in my ear—we were all too excited to speak quietly—'The big rock's down on them.'

And sure enough the boulder I had noticed sticking out was gone at last, as I suppose all the other boulders had gone before it, century by century, down into the lowest level that the river course had scoured out.

"We crossed the bridge, still nanging on to the car, and scrambled over the bank into the mountain, before the priest could get down; but the doctor, who was an active young chap, simply took a flying leap at the bank and was with us. The driver left the horse where he was, and ran too. But over the rough ground I couldn't keep up with Dan and the doctor, as they scrambled like goats among the heather, taking the angler's track along the river.

"There was a tearing great flood, of course, but nothing to account for washing out a house that stood twenty feet above the water till we got to the long pool. The river was back between the banks, —it would generally be six or seven feet below them, —but you could see it had been out till the gorge was filled like a bath. I could see nothing of O'Hanlon's house till I got right to the top of the last rise in the path, and there were Dan and the doctor looking down at it. The farther wall was standing and

bit of the near one, but the whole was heaped with clay and stuff. And right through the three gables of shed and cottage there was a monstrous savage gap, where the stone had bowled through as clean

as a ball through a wicket. And there was the stone itself, fair in the throat of the stream at the very narrowest point. The water tore through in a sluice at each side of it, cutting in on the bank like a knife: while I was looking, a great piece of the far side fell with a plop.

"It was plain enough what had happened. A big rain-burst had detached the rock from its holding in the face of the hill: it had rolled down—and probably between the lash of the rain and the roar of the river at their doors the people in the house never even heard the sound of it. It had struck the wall and swept all before it, then, lodging in the river-bed, dammed up that terrible flood, and in a few seconds the whole place was awash. The little sort of lawn that the house stood in had been six or eight feet deep in water. Then the clay of the banks gave, and the river cut through, sucking out whatever floated, and tearing it along down to the sea. The whole place was as bare as your hand, only that about the walls of the house the loose earth that had been brought down with the falling stone was licked into smooth heaps. And when we came nearer we saw a man's boot sticking up through it.

"We fell to, tearing with our hands. But the clay was washed hard together. 'Where'll we get spades?' I said. 'Go up, Dan, to Biddy O'Hea's, and bring one down,' said the priest. But you should have seen his face when he said it. Dan pre-

tended not to hear him. Then the priest roared at him. 'Ah, sure, what use?' Dan said sulkily. I caught hold of him, saying, 'Come on, Dan.' He went then; but there was no getting him to hurry. I ran on by myself. When I got to the house the door was shut and locked. I knocked first, then I kicked till it was opened. There was the woman sitting by the fire; she never lifted her head. Two frightened-looking girls had let me in. I said, 'Give me all the spades you have.' They brought me a spade and a slane for turf-cutting, and I ran back. Dan was outside. 'Was she in there?' he asked, with a face of terror. 'Yes,' said I; I was in no humour for talking. 'Go on with these,' and I gave him the spades. He ran like a hare now, and I came on slower. By the time I got down there was a crowd about the place. When the clay was all turned over, they had got three bodies out, and a cat and two dogs and a pig. All O'Hanlon's live stock were out that evening, but nothing escaped that was under the roof. One man and a child were crushed right into the ground by the boulder. The man was Johnny O'Hanlon; and I saw big Neil M'Nelis, that he had wanted to fight, sobbing and crying over him, 'Och, Johnny O'Hanlon, is that where you are now? You that was standing up to me that bold this day, and me as big again as you. It was the foul blow you met, Johnny.' But little M'Cormick, the sharp-

faced, red-headed little fellow, stood up there in the middle, and his eyes were as red as fire. 'Boys,' he said, 'the rest of them's gone down the river. Where's the bloody witch that done this, till we send her after them?'

"It's a horrible thing to say; but when I thought of that old woman sitting crouched there by the fire, as if she was gloating over the defeat of her enemies, the man's words seemed natural. There wasn't much time to think, though. The priest was standing there, a big, red-faced, coarse-looking man as you could see. He took a step over, and he caught M'Cormick by the throat, and shook him like a rat. 'Would you dare!' he said, 'ye bad Christian! Would you dare, then!' Then he threw the man from him, and he faced round, gathering the whole crowd in front of him with a sweep of his arm. Then he made the sign of the cross in air, and raised one hand.

"Go down on your knees, every one of you, and pray for the souls of them that God has cut off without warning in their sins.'

"It was the strangest thing I ever saw, the alteration in him from a red-faced bully into the shepherd of his people. The fashion of his countenance changed, as the Bible says. And he prayed there, standing over the dead bodies, while the men knelt round him in the twilight—he rolling out the Latin words, that neither I nor they understood, in his great Con-

naught brogue. Then he stopped and spoke to them again. 'Now you will say one more Paternoster for the help of a soul that is maybe in worse danger nor theirs, and in saying it you will pray humbly to Almighty God that he may not bring down upon your heads the fulfilment of your own evil desires. And you will leave to the judgment of God the one that invoked God's judgment.'

"He began again in the broad Latin, kneeling down himself, and they said the prayer after him, sentence by sentence, kneeling there on the wet sod. Then he stood up and shook himself. 'Away with you down the river, boys, and search every eddy and back-water, and get nets and dredge the holes. There's ten bodies needing Christian burial, and that's the last good turn ever you'll do them.'

"They broke up in a minute. The priest watched them scatter, some going back to the bridge, some following down the bank. Then he turned up the hill to the woman's house. I know no more about it; but I couldn't understand the confidence with which he faced that job, when he started up across the heather at a slow pace, with his eyes fixed on the ground, and reciting prayers to himself, for I could see his lips moving. I have often speculated since on the scene there must have been.

However, as I said, I know nothing of what happened—except that Biddy O'Hea was always a pattern Christian from that day, and the neighbourhood regarded her with fear certainly, but with a kind of veneration. They were vastly civil to her, I need not tell you—and, what is more, to judge by what I heard since, they are rather proud of her as a local celebrity.

"The bodies were all recovered—most of them in the tideway. But we worked at the river all that night. I couldn't help being grimly amused at the number of nets that were forthcoming in half an hour, and the general handiness in working them, and the promptitude and skill that was displayed in getting out torches. I suppose there wasn't a man or boy but had burned the water times and again. I tell you a queer thing, though. There were over fifty salmon taken out that night as they were working the nets,—for there had been a tremendous run of fish,—but every one of them was put back. Oh no, it was no use to me; some other chaps did very well on the river before that flood had run down—one man got ten in a morning just above Dohoomiss. But I never threw a line. I didn't care to benefit by St Brigid's dispensations."

STEPHEN GWYNN.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE KING'S ILLNESS — UNDIGNIFIED JOURNALISM — LORD KITCHENER'S RETURN — A TWOFOLD TRIUMPH — LORD SALISBURY — MR BALFOUR'S SYMPATHETIC AUTHORITY — THE LATIN QUARTER — LONDON AND PARIS — THE DOMINATION OF THE NOVEL.

A MONTH ago all Britain was looking forward to the crowning of the King. As we said, with pardonable assurance, the auspices were good; but auspices are oftentimes deceptive, and Britain was doomed to disappointment. On the very eve of the coronation, the King was compelled to undergo an operation, from which he has most happily recovered, and his people lost the privilege of doing him homage. It was as though a Nemesis had overtaken our too great prosperity. Peace had been declared in such a manner and at such a time as the most sanguine had scarcely expected, and then, as if to assure us of the limitations set upon our happiness, came the illness of the King. After all, one thought, there is such a thing as chance; and no nation, as no man, is permitted to reach the height of good fortune unperturbed. But mischance is not always sent in vain; and the illness of the King, if it be not heartless to contemplate the suffering of any man in a spirit of calculation, has done more even than a pageant to quicken loyalty and to unite the Empire. As too rapid a prosperity should chasten our pride, so a common

sorrow should intensify in the body politic the feelings of patriotism and affection. And we are proud to record that no sooner were the festivities of the coronation put off than all thought of self vanished, and nothing was left revealed save a sincere and hearty devotion to the throne. The immense loss of money, shared by all the world, was borne without a murmur. The thousands of country folk who had come up from the provinces and spent hardly saved gold upon the journey showed that their anxiety was not for their own pockets but for the safety of the King. Hour after hour they thronged about Buckingham Palace, scanning the bulletins and thinking, perchance, that they best showed their sympathy by their neighbourhood to their King. That the King's illness was not displeasing to Europe is but another tribute to our greatness. The French journals, which could make merry over "une mascarade ratée," prove how little they understand the temper of England. The "masquerade" (to use their word) was not performed, but its failure aroused neither passion nor excitement in the English crowd. After all, the "masquerade" was the

performance of an act of allegiance, and if the King were ill that act of allegiance could not be performed. So that it was sorrow, not resentment, which Englishmen felt, and they expressed it with a dignity and a restraint which were admirable to contemplate. If there be any republicans in our midst, this spectacle of universal grief must have appalled them. Verily sovereignty, which, eighty years ago, had fallen into disrepute, was never contemplated with greater loyalty and respect than to-day. The follies of George IV. are forgotten in the splendid services of Victoria; and Edward VII., while he profits by the wisdom of his mother, claims the people's homage by those gifts of tact and simplicity which are eminently his. In truth, now that his recovery is certain, we can hardly deplore his illness, save for the suffering which he has undergone. Popular as he was a month ago, he has won a place in the nation's regard which before his illness he might not boast. The affection of a whole people is waywardly bestowed; but there is no doubt that misfortune has doubly secured the chain which binds King Edward to his subjects. Seldom in history has there been manifested so eager and spontaneous a sympathy, and however long the King lives he can never lose the added popularity which he has thus inadvertently won. To the satisfaction at his recovery there is no dissentient voice,

and when in a brief few weeks he goes to the Abbey, he will make his progress twice fortunate, not only in the increased love of his people but in the good hope of recovery.

The expression of sympathy, indeed, erred a little on the side of excess, and we regret to remember that our cheaper newspapers forgot in their lust of excitement the dignity of the occasion. No good ever comes of falsehood, and the reporters who discovered "strong, bronzed men weeping in the street" had as little regard for their trade as for the truth. Not even the illness of a king can draw tears from the eyes of "strong, bronzed men," and if it could, we should think little enough of the bronzed heroes. It is not by hysteria that we express our sincerest sorrow, and the conduct of the journals in degrading what should be a dignified emotion to the level of their own profit is pitiful to behold. During the last years our soldiers have proved that British endurance and British courage are unchanged, and our journals meanwhile have done their best to show that Britain is an easy prey to sentiment and sensation. We have no desire to exaggerate the importance of our newspapers, but even the journalist is a man, and we would have him mend his manners and his morals, while he quickens his vision. However, with this exception, the sympathy of the whole empire for the King was sincerely felt and honourably expressed, nor do we believe

that any monarch ever ascended the throne richer in the goodwill of his subjects, and in the affection of a wide and prosperous empire.

To the note of sorrow succeeds a note of joy. Lord Kitchener has returned, after an arduous war and an honourable peace. It is a commonplace of criticism to say that he has distinguished himself no less as a soldier than as a diplomatist; and it is true that he has not merely beaten the Boers—he has conciliated them. This twofold triumph is unparalleled, and it must be the more agreeable to Lord Kitchener, because it is due to the fact that the Boers, who feared his military prowess, also respected his plighted word. To win the confidence of a defeated foe is a high accomplishment, to which few generals have attained, and it was but right and proper that Lord Kitchener should have been given conspicuous honours at his return. Statisticians tell us that to parallel his reception we must go back to Waterloo, and if it be true it is also just, for since Wellington came back from the defeat of Napoleon, England has not put so great a hazard upon the fortune of a campaign. To Lord Kitchener's diplomacy peace and goodwill are the most eloquent tributes. His military triumph has not been so easily understood. The critics of the war, recently concluded, have made no secret of their displeasure. They have united generals and soldiers in a com-

mon condemnation; they have asserted that the progress made was infamously slow; they have laughed at what they are pleased to call the impotent courage of those who sacrificed their lives for their fatherland. But their criticism will be as soon forgotten as their impatience. To be twitted with inaction is the inevitable lot of careful and determined generals. Wellington's army in the Peninsula, Moltke's army before Paris, were more bitterly ridiculed than the English army which has subdued South Africa. Yet no historian, writing in the calm reflection of his study, will indorse the hostile criticism of Wellington or Moltke which once was popular. To-day we can hardly believe that the Government of the time would, if it could, have recalled Wellington, or that Moltke was once the butt of the music-halls of Berlin. But so it was, and in the art of war, even more than in the arts of peace, the good that men do lives after them. In fact, it will be the verdict of history, we believe, that Lord Kitchener, so far from being a laggard in the fight, finished his job with incredible rapidity. To oppose the activity of guerilla bands is notoriously the greatest difficulty which a soldier can confront, and the difficulty is increased tenfold when the country fights on the side of the enemy. Edward I. was no mean general, yet for all his bravery and organisation, he spent many years in subduing Wales. And if you would get

the true measure of Lord Kitchener's genius, you must compare his exploits with those of Edward I. in Wales or of General Monk in Scotland. Lord Kitchener, then, lost no time in South Africa, and he was rewarded with so speedy a victory because he left nothing to chance. All great warfare is system, and Lord Kitchener is system incarnate. And this fact, we think, has persuaded some enthusiasts to underrate our general's versatility. He is no fighting soldier, says one critic; he is a foreman of the works, says another. But we believe, on the contrary, that Lord Kitchener is an excellent fighting soldier, and no general worthy the name would ever have failed as a foreman of the works. The qualities which may seem the least romantic are the basis of all warfare, and it is well to remember that Marlborough, who has not the reputation of a mere organiser, won the battle of Blenheim because he had new boots waiting for his tired soldiers at Heidelberg.

But while Lord Kitchener knows how to fight as well as how to plan, he is a true soldier in one other respect: he preserves a single-minded devotion to his business. He is as little interested in the intrigue of life as any man who ever drew sword in his country's defence. He chooses his staff on no other ground than the ground of ability, and, having chosen them, he expects from them all the work and energy they can give. The allure-

ments of society, the chances of popularity, carry not a feather's weight with him, and nothing could be finer than the simplicity of his interest. This simplicity is echoed in his speeches. He speaks always as a soldier rather than as an orator, and the few words which he said at Southampton and in London in gratitude for himself and on behalf of his army might have been uttered by a servant of the Roman Republic. England is, indeed, fortunate in those who serve her, nor need we fear the spite and rivalry of Europe so long as Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener are here to frame our army and to fight our battles.

Of late years the history of our country has had no dull page, and no sooner did Lord Kitchener enter London in triumph than we heard that England had changed her Prime Minister. Of Lord Salisbury's conspicuous services we will not speak here. It is enough to say that for twenty years he has dominated the public life of Great Britain, and has made our name respected in every corner of Europe. His successor has been justly and inevitably chosen, and we congratulate both the Empire and Mr Balfour upon the King's choice. No statesman in England could unite conflicting interests and rival politicians with the sympathetic authority of Mr Balfour. If he be not an orator, yet he has the tact of parlia-

mentary government, as no one can doubt who has heard him bring to a close a tiresome discussion, generally with urbanity, sometimes with an asperity which is all the more remarkable because it is unexpected. Suavity, indeed, is Mr Balfour's common attitude of mind, but he has shown himself, on a hundred difficult occasions, a fierce and intrepid fighter, and he possesses those qualities which control a difficult assembly in a higher measure than any of his contemporaries. Again, he is distinguished by a large share of that detachment which was the strength of Lord Salisbury. He cares far more for his own convictions than for the convictions of the people. The press has as little weight with him as popular clamour, and he is therefore not exposed to that great danger of tergiversation, to which British politicians are most subject. He will take measures, not because he thinks them acceptable to this journalist or that wire-puller, but because he believes them beneficial to the State. And how splendid a habit is this detachment of mind can only be understood by States which have been swayed by such hysterical demagogues as Mr Gladstone. Moreover, Mr Balfour has a cynical insight into the limitations of politics. He knows (and has said) that politics are not the whole of life. He will never wish to destroy his country for a theory, nor to override the constitution

for a whim. Mr Balfour's ambitions are admirable, but they are also under control; and he is quite incapable of that well-meaning fanaticism which has done more harm to the State even than egoism and self-seeking. Briefly, we believe that the Government of the country is intrusted to a statesman who not only can lead his party, but knows where to lead them, whose sense of justice and toleration will secure the amenity of political life, and whose high sense of duty and patriotism will attach not only the loyalty of his followers but the respect of foreign nations. And much as we admire the splendid services which Lord Salisbury has performed for his country, we feel that the fortunes of Britain are still safe in the hands of his successor.

London is not inspired with the humane spirit of letters. It cherishes no schools; it has no quarter devoted to the arts. There is within its borders no *pays latin*, where dreamers dream dreams and poets sing their songs. But Paris still guards a corner against changing manners and the pickaxe of destruction. There, on the left bank of the Seine, with the Tavern of the Boulevard St Michel for its centre, is a little land within the city, separate and dedicated to the Muses. No sordid ideals, no savage greeds, are permitted to cross the frontiers of this little land, whose indwellers are gay with an empty pocket, and valiant in spite of failure. Even if fortune

smile not upon them, they have a generous reward, since they aim only at the highest, and they care for the approval of none save their comrades. A noble rivalry of excellence is theirs, and the head of a *cénacle* is as happy and as powerful (within his borders) as a king. And when youth grows to manhood, bringing with it other duties and heavier responsibilities, there is still left to the brave band of youth a glorious memory. Their domain is no Fleet Street, where the hapless youth of England attempt to pick up a living; it is a veritable Parnassus, and those who climb its slopes make no concessions to the imperious demands of livelihood. To turn journalist is to be driven across the river in scornful exile; to remain poet and poor is to enjoy the freedom of the Luxembourg, and to watch the panorama of the world from an hilarious café. For the Frenchman a sojourn in the Latin Quarter is an experience which even frock-coats cannot efface, and some we have known so profoundly enamoured of the place that they have grown old in the service of its ideals. And even though a stranger wander in this pleasant gipsy land, he does not emerge from it the same. He carries away lessons of freedom and joyousness which he cannot forget, and to return to it after a lapse of years is to feel for the first time the cold finger of age. Now, we are reminded of this true Bohemia by M. Paul Fort's 'Paris Sentimental,'

in which a delicate poet sketches "le roman de nos vingt ans." Here in a brief two hundred pages is the sentiment of the Luxembourg Gardens, of the Bal Bullier, of the *beaux dimanches* spent in the country, of youthful jealousies, of sweet companionship. The existence pictured by M. Paul Fort, with so slight a pencil, could only be the existence of the poet. Its gay irresponsibility could not be matched elsewhere than in the neighbourhood of the Boulevard St Michel, where life has an ease and colour of its own. M. Paul Fort, admirable poet that he is, will some day outgrow his environment. But he will never forget the sights, the sounds, the emotions which touched his careless youth to joyousness, and inspired his ballades with the voice of truth. What can we show in London for this dainty Bohemia? Nothing. The young Englishman must seek his youthful romance in his University, or he must grow up with no better romance than may be found in books. For him there is no light-hearted apprenticeship. He writes or sings because he must; but he can never know the pleasure of a rivalry which extends but to a dozen; he can never make a fearless appeal to no larger a circle than his own friends. It is not for him to pen the necessary treatise upon 'Narcisse,' to come forth blushing with his little sheaf of verse. Our sense of humour or over-stern practicality is too strong

for the indulgence. So it happens that the *cénacles* of London are middle-aged. They hold their meetings in respectable clubs, and they are better skilled in intrigues than in the leading of forlorn hopes. London, in brief, is no Parnassus. It is not a school, but merely a dwelling-place for men of letters. Writers not a few have listened to the chimes at midnight, as they wandered home along its lamp-lit streets. Poets have celebrated the beauty of its atmosphere, have hymned its spires half lost in a mist of gold. But the London which they sing is a London not of their dreams but of their vision. If we may use an ugly word, it is an objective worship which they offer at the shrine. London means to them something in which their eyes have found delight. It does not mean a palace wherein they sojourned when as yet hopes were greater than deeds, when their random thoughts were less of success than of glory. And now to enforce our argument come Mr G. S. Street's wise reflections upon London in his 'Book of Essays' (London: Constable). Of course between M. Paul Fort and Mr Street there is a wide difference. The Frenchman's temperament is lyrical, the Englishman's analytic. While M. Paul Fort regards Paris as the material of poetry, Mr Street sees in London an excuse for a searching and a witty analysis. But Mr Street is essentially a man of letters. His outlook upon life is literary

and nothing else. And you feel that London has meant nothing to his artistic development. He describes it always in the terms of literature, but he views it with the eye of a man of the world. As he should, he dislikes Fleet Street, that home of false news, false emphasis, false ambition. Like a man of sense he prefers Piccadilly, and this is how he sees it: "I do not think it can be a really personal and individual pleasure that comes to me when on a fine morning I look down Piccadilly from the top of the slope. I have observed it often in others, and I always fancy that people look brighter, with a blander eye upon the world, here than elsewhere in London. For myself, I am conscious of a sort of ludicrous increase of importance, as though here one were less of an ant on an ant-hill and more of a necessary screw in the machine. I feel almost as one having a definite and not despicable place in the community, who can hold up his head and meet the world with a smile, not dodge it round the corner." Thus Mr Street; and now take M. Paul Fort's vision of the Luxembourg in a summer twilight: "Le couchant violet tremble au fond du jour rouge. Le Luxembourg exhale une odeur d'oranger. Et Manon s'arrête à mon bras: plus rien ne bouge, les arbres, les passants, ce nuage éloigné. Il n'est plus une fleur où l'air lourd ne se pose, et qui ne sente en elle un cœur battre et mourir, un

cœur d'air étouffant sa corolle ; et les roses défailleient vers la terre, sous le poids du zéphyr. Il semble que le monde entier n'ait plus qu'une âme. La poussière du jour retombe parfumée ; et le bassin respire un jet d'eau qui se pâme et, sur sa propre image, en mourant vient chanter." Much, as we have said, must be allowed for temperament. Yet there remains an essential difference. London, all untouched by the romance of literature, appeals merely to the man of the world who lurks in us all. Paris, or a quarter of Paris, belongs to those dreams and aspirations of youth which are unworldly as literature itself, and can never be coldly dissected save by the filibuster who believes the Arc de Triomphe the centre of the universe. We would not change either Paris or London. Paris has its delights which we pray will outlast all the vulgarities of modern life ; and as for London—London is not fit to have a Latin Quarter, and we trust she will never have the vanity to pretend that she has.

But Paris and London, different in many aspects, are alike in this, that each bows to the domination of the popular novel. M. Jules Verne, a Frenchman who, we expect, never wandered in the Gardens of Luxembourg, has been lately exercising his familiar gift of prophecy, and has declared that the cheap journals would presently kill the novel. M. Jules Verne's prophecies have often come true, and we wish the

world no better luck than the extinction of the novel, as that form of printed matter is practised to-day. Methods of literature are soon outgrown : none of them is eternal, as a very little reflection will soon show ; and nothing is truer than that this *genre* or that is nearest its death when it is most eagerly practised. The Shakespearean drama died of the facility wherewith the clumsiest hand was able to fashion it, and it is not surprising that it could not outlive the performances of Otway. Thus, too, the comedy of the Restoration became so common that it perished of ease and inanition ; and though the drama still lives, it is a very different drama to that which amused (or bored) our forefathers. To-day the novel is in the same plight. It is more frequent than ever it was. Though many persons have, we believe, ceased to read novels, very few have as yet ceased to write them. But as it is always darkest before dawn, so let us hope that the novel will expire at the very moment that there is most of it. Moreover, the fact that it has ceased to be an art, and has become a trade, is all in favour of a speedy funeral. The novel may now be produced by a purely mechanical process, without the intervention of any human intelligence. The period, the jargon, the incidents are now settled, we are told, by the publisher—that higher power behind the throne of literature—and the publisher will soon tire of the

performance. The publisher, indeed, has more reason to be tired of the novel than the reader, since the multiplicity of novels has made his trade a mere gamble. The success of a book is seldom any index of its merit, and this being the case, the publisher can only depend upon chance to fill his pocket. Wherefore we cannot understand whose interest it is to keep the novel alive. Competition having cut the profits of novelist and publisher alike, and custom having staled the taste of Mudie's clients, who in the world wants to see any new novels? Of course if a man of genius come along, he will write his books in the public's despite, but men of genius do not touch the market of the novelists, and since his books are not

likely to get a hearing until he is old and tried, so they will not affect the future of the novel. Yes, probably the novel will die, and nothing has ever been buried which deserves less tears. But we trust that in one sense M. Jules Verne's prophecy will prove false: he believes that the novel will die, killed by the press. Now, much as we dislike the cheap novel, we dislike the cheap press still more, and we are sanguine enough to believe that that compost of bad news, bad faith, and bad opinion will not survive many years. O that there might be a battle, as of the Kilkenny cats, and that when it was over we might find nothing left of journal or novel but a pulp of torn paper and shattered bindings!

ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.

VIII. STILL POTTERING.

To the delight of the men and disgust of the brigadier, day broke without bringing any further orders to the New Cavalry Brigade. So it remained halted in the great open prairie which fringes the Beer Vlei. It may also be conjectured that De Wet and his following, as they were stripping the adjacent little township of Strydenburg, learned with satisfaction that the British columns, which lay round him like the spokes of a wheel to the axle, were as immobile as usual — Plumer from the force of circumstances, the others for the reasons set down in the preceding paper. But the cunning guerilla had no intention of dallying at Strydenburg. Even British column commanders at times had been known to shake off their lethargy. He just remained in the town long enough to replenish his quartermaster's stores department and to take over the fresh ponies which Hertzog had collected for him, and then moved north in three columns, trusting to pass between the spokes of the imaginary wheel before Plumer had collected himself. Brand, with a thin hedge of Free Staters and rebels, was left as a decoy to cover Strydenburg, while the three columns made for Marks Drift in the loop of the Orange river, southwest of Kimberley. And while

De Wet put the first day's plan of these movements into progress, the New Cavalry Brigade, by order, remained halted, covering the entrance to the pass at Minie Kloof.

The men, however, were delighted. For the first time for many weeks they were able to turn round and attend to their own personal comfort, to change their under-clothes and to sort their kits. The soldier man on service loves to sort his kit. The very fact that he is able to shake out his modest bag to the bottom spells "holiday," and in latter-day trekking holidays for the men were rare. But even holidays can bring their heart-burnings, and about the breakfast-hour a howl of despair went up from the Horse Artillery lines. A casual stroll through the knee-deep heather to Freddy's quarters repaid those sightseers who had energy enough to be interested in camp excitements. The horse-gunner major had long felt annoyance at the turnout of his Kaffir boys and teamsters. The predominant attribute of the Kaffir is vanity, an attribute which he possesses in common with all savages and most white men. The reason for this vanity we will not pursue, as we have nothing to do with the ethics of masculine conceit: it is sufficient for this story that it exists. This vanity has caused the Kaffirs of South Africa to

acquire about fifty per cent of the British army tunics which have landed in that continent. Thomas Atkins, as a rule, is not over-blessed with money, consequently he cannot resist the temptation of the five golden sovereigns which the Kaffir is prepared to give for any scarlet tunic which is not in the last stage of decay. The transfer of uniform came to such a pitch that an army order was issued on the subject. Not that an army order was sufficient to stay the general traffic in British uniforms, but it furnished such right-minded soldiers as the horse-gunner major with the "cue" which they required. Freddy's Kaffirs had struck a new and green regiment, and being themselves near the end of a six months' contract, they were "full of money." Consequently at Britstown, where money had possessed extra fascinations for the British soldier, the "boys" attached to the battery had been able to lay in a very complete outfit in Line regimentals. The halt gave Freddy his opportunity, and he had every kit laid bare. The revelation was wonderful. There was not a driver or *voor looper* who had not his scarlet jerkin. Many, indeed, had two, to say nothing of forage-caps, field-service caps, dragoon overalls, and gunner slacks. The Kaffirs had at first looked upon the kit inspection as a joke. But they lapsed into a puzzled silence when they saw their belongings cast upon a common heap. Their great white eyes grew bigger and bigger, and

their repulsive lips wider and wider apart, until, when the last bag had been ransacked, the torch was applied to the pile of clothing. Then they realised the blasting of all their hopes, and with one accord they gave vent to the despairing yell which had attracted the attention of the camp. They became like men possessed. Smiting themselves heavily upon the head with their fists, they went through the paroxysms of negroid lamentation. One could almost feel for them, great bronzed children that they are. They had worked hard for months, shared the privations and dangers of war with the white men, in order that they might return to their kraals bedecked as they thought in all the glory of the white man's clothes. To them the Utopia of life would have been their homecoming. The admiration of chattering women, the acclamation of the piccaninies, and the hideous smile of their paramount chief as they humbly presented him with a battered helmet in a semi-decayed state of pipe-clay finish. But Freddy was no philanthropist when the honour of the uniform which his family had worn for two centuries was at stake. And he was right. The dignity of the King's uniform is precious before all philanthropy: "These brutes in Gunner Uniform — never! They may keep their karki; but I will not have our uniform outraged in my battery, whatever other people may think!"

The native question throughout the war has furnished an

interesting study. It cannot be claimed that, situated as the circumstances are in South Africa, good will result from this tremendous struggle for existence and paramountcy between two white races. It must always be remembered that South Africa will, similarly with India, be held by the dominant white race with the sword. It is not for us to trace here what troubles may be in store for the white races in the far future. The situation in the present and near future appears unsatisfactory enough. The untutored mind of the Ethiopian does not appreciate the finer ethics of social intercourse and the equality of mankind. Freedom to his reasoning means independence; to possess independence, to the semi-savage, is a proof of power. The inherent vanity of the aboriginal then finds scope, and the nation which cringed and quailed under the sjambok of the Boer will be the first to rebel against the equity of the Briton. And what have we done during these long months of military occupation to counteract the evil effects of war. Nothing: Briton-like we have selected to work upon exterior lines. We have lived in the present, secure for the future. Who has attempted to follow the train of thought which has been uppermost in the native mind? Yet it would have been simple enough to have analysed their minds. Will it not have been somewhat of this kind?—"The Boers were few and the British were many. Yet it has taken the

British months to stamp out the Boers who were few. Moreover, we have done all the scouting for the British—without us they themselves could have done nothing. Also of what value are the British soldiers? They are paid 30s. a-month. We—and we are black men—are paid by the British £3 and £4 a-month. Therefore we must be twice or three times as good as the British soldiers! And look how the British treat us. How different to the treatment we received at the hands of the Boers. The British must be afraid of us!" And in the abstract this reasoning is sound. We do treat the native as if we were afraid of him. We do treat him so that he might justly compare himself favourably with the British soldier. We take it for granted that this illiterate black son of the south will know, as we do, all the troubles and standards of the labour market: will discern the reason, which to us is obvious, of his princely pay. But this is where our crass stupidity overtakes us. The native does not arrive at his conclusions through the same channel of thought as we do ourselves. How could he? And as we only use him to suit our own convenience, and remain reckless of the interpretation which he places upon our actions, we shall only have ourselves to blame, when, having pandered to the inherent vanity of the black, we suddenly find him at our throats. Not that we believe that the natives are sufficiently advanced to render

our hold in the country insecure. But they have been pampered by us enough to make them imagine vain things, and vain imaginings may result at no distant period in a repetition of that rapine, pillage, and massacre of isolated white settlements, which has ever furnished the saddest stones in the cairn of our great Empire.

As the sun rose it brought news from the Prieska Road. The helio twinkled out another message from the general: "Good water at Rietvlei, four miles on. Move on to Rietvlei, form your brigade there, and await orders from me." Almost at the same moment the helio from the summit of Minie Kloof called us up. "Have brought along two squadrons of the Mount Nelson Light Horse and a troop of the 21st King's Dragoon Guards. Pushing on as fast as possible"—signed, "Brigade-Major New Cavalry Brigade."

The brigadier appeared completely uninterested. He received the information of his coming reinforcement and the general's latest orders without comment, and having eaten his breakfast, returned to his tent. For the time being the brigade had become a cipher. The only really satisfied person in the camp seemed to be the Intelligence officer, who saw in the arrival of the real brigade-major an end to the multiform duties which had been thrust upon him. The brigade stood fast, and presently, riding out of an almost opaque pillar of dust, the brigade-major and

his detached command came meandering into camp. The arrival of the reinforcement moved the camp to interest. Much had been heard of the Mount Nelson Light Horse, which had been specially raised against Lord Kitchener's demand for more mounted men. The Mount Nelson Light Horse rode into camp. The gunners, who had turned out *en masse* to welcome their comrades, just put their hands in their breeches pockets and turned away with the single interjection, "Good heavens!" The dragoons, who were younger soldiers and less versed in veldt lore than the gunners, essayed a cheer. A fitful answer came back from the dusty arrivals—it might have been compared with the foreign cackle by which the clients of a Soho boarding-house give voice to their admiration of the tune of the dinner-gong. The brigadier came out of his tent and stood in the open, bareheaded and in his shirt-sleeves. Soldier without ribbons—frank, open, and gallant English gentleman. His expert eye ran down the ragged ranks of his newly acquired legion. He had commanded Colonials during the hardest fighting in Natal. The Dragoons might not be judges, but nothing escaped his time-tested eye. He caught each detail, the Semitic outline of half the profiles, the nervous saddlepoise of the twice-attested Peruvian, the hang-dog look of the few true men among the ranks, who shrank that a soldier should find them in their present associations. The brigadier's

moustache ill hid the working of his mouth. Then the ludicrous setting of the scene appealed to his light-hearted nature, and, laughing heartily, he turned to his staff with the single comment, "Gadzooks! they conspire against the fame of my fair name. There is only one place in the wide world that I can lead that 'push' to, and its name is Stellenbosch!"

But if the Mount Nelson Light Horse couldn't fight, they could talk. They were full of second-hand blood. Had not a troop of theirs been captured by De Wet, had not their men and officer witnessed De Wet's cold-blooded outrage upon a British officer! All this was news to the New Cavalry Brigade, and in view of a popular desire to lionise De Wet, it will not be ill-advised to put the history of his action upon record. We will not refer to the cruel murder of Morgenthal, only preceded in modern history by the murder of Macnaghten by Ackbar Khan, or the pitiless treatment of the prisoners taken at Dewetsdorp in December 1900. To us this one incident is sufficient. When De Wet crossed to the south of the Orange river in the vicinity of Norval's Pont the troops which Lyttelton set in operation against him from Colesberg were too late to head him, and in the course of his doubling—and De Wet broke back with considerable skill—he captured a small proportion of his pursuers. These men having been pilfered of much of their wearing apparel, in-

cluding boots, could only with the greatest difficulty keep pace with the rapid movements of their captors. It must be remembered that the sleuth-hound, Plumer, was on De Wet's trail, and the Boers had no time to waste if they were to evade him. There came a time when the half-starved, almost naked, and footsore prisoners could move no more. All the food that they had been given was in live kind,—sheep that they had to kill, quarter, and dress themselves. Cooking was out of the question, as the elements were against them, even if they had possessed the necessary appliances. Half-way through an exhausting march—flight would perhaps better describe the nature of the movement—these wretched prisoners lay down, and refused to move another foot. The threats and chiding of their escort were in vain. Then some one rode forward and informed De Wet. The black-haired guerilla galloped back to the tail of the column, and, worked up into a paroxysm of rage, demanded the senior officer amongst the British prisoners. A tall English gentleman stepped forward. In a moment the guerilla's arm was raised, and the cruel sjambok of rhinoceros-hide fell across the Englishman's face, leaving a great blue weal. The arm was raised for a second blow; but the Englishman, prisoner though he was, and though his life hung in the balance, closed with his brutal captor. Other Boers, doubtless feeling the sting of the blow as

keenly as the recipient, separated the pair before the unarmed Englishman found the ruffian's throat. But the blow had been struck, — unarmed prisoners even of officer rank had been chastised, an act of savagery fit to rank with the cold-blooded murder of an envoy. Yet the day will doubtless come when ignorant English people will vie with each other to do honour to the man who struck the miscreant blow. They will be persons ignorant of the feeling which permeated the army in South Africa. As the news spread round the camp, by common consent it was agreed that De Wet should never be handed up alive if it fell to the lot of the New Cavalry Brigade to bring him to his knees.

In obedience to the superior command, the whole brigade in the afternoon sauntered on the four miles set down in the general's message. The day had been a repetition of the one which had preceded it — one of those burning karoo afternoons, which seem to sap the very soul out of all things living. The feeling of dejection which pervaded the staff seemed to have communicated itself to the whole column, and the New Cavalry Brigade slunk rather than marched into camp. It was not a cheerful camping-ground — a solitary farm-house of the poorest construction, and two shallow, slimy pools of water were the only attractions which it could claim. The men soberly fixed their horse-lines, and rolled over to sweat out the trials

of the heat until sundown. The brigadier, who was still in his Achilles mood, retired to his waggon. The new brigade-major, who was the only man with any spirits left at all, busied himself with arranging for the night-pickets and nursing the Mount Nelson Light Horse. But over a bowl of tea, which the mess-servants arranged by four o'clock, the brigadier seemed to revive; and he had just become approachable when the colonel of the newly arrived contingent sauntered up to the mess-waggon, — a big, rather ungainly man, who arrived with all the self-assurance of a man in authority.

Colonel (looking round the group of officers at tea and singling out the Brigade-Major, whom he knew). "Which is the brigadier?"

Brigadier (who had totalled the new-comer's checks in one brief glance). "I am that unfortunate. What can I do for you?"

C. (saluting casually) "Glad to meet you, sir; I thought that I would come round to introduce myself — especially as I have some bad news!"

B. "A truly noble action, and one which is likely to ingratiate you here. What is it?"

C. "Nothing more or less than my men and horses are dead-beat. They will have to halt here at least two days before they will be fit to move. I have——"

B. "My dear colonel, have some tea; or perhaps you would

prefer some whisky-and-sparklet? You bring me the best news that I have heard to-day!"

C. "Thank you, sir; but I am serious about——"

B. "Of course, of course you are serious, and I should have been delighted to have left you and your regiment here as long as you pleased—the longer the better. Only I shall probably have orders to move with my whole force before daybreak, and that being the case, I am afraid that your 'robbers' will have to move too, 'dead-beat' or not."

C. "But I assure you, sir——"

B. "There is no need to assure me of anything, colonel. I have absolute confidence in your knowledge of the state of inefficiency existing in your regiment. Only I will beg you to remember in future that I am the judge as to the capabilities of movement of the units composing this column. But let us discuss the prospects of peace, or some other less abstruse subject than the Mount Nelson Light Horse. In the meantime, colonel, just to emphasise what I have said, my Intelligence officer has orders to go out to those farms over there to see if he can get suitable guides. I have ordered him to take a troop of your men. He will start in fifteen minutes. Won't you stay for your drink?" (The lion of the slouch-hat persuasion was reduced to the lamb; he saluted, and sidled away while the brigadier replenished his tea-cup.)

Brigade-Major. "That is about his size, sir. He has been more trouble to me in my march from Hanover Road than the

whole of the truck, ox-waggon included."

B. "I know them. I knew that man's character from the tilt of his hat and the cut of his breeches. He will probably prove a good swashbuckler if kept in his place. But he came up here to divide authority with me, and only one man can command this crush, and only one man is going to. These fellows always become saucy, if you let them,—as soon as they pin ostrich feathers into their hats. They are welcome to the feathers, but they must drop the other. So cut along, Mr Intelligence, and see that you get that troop up to time. I don't mind if you lose it; but you must be back yourself sometime to-night. I want a reliable guide to take me anywhere within a radius of twenty miles, and all the information that you can incidentally pick up. If we hang about here much longer, we shall find ourselves let in for a night-attack, and a night-attack with a Town Guard crowd like my new addition is to be avoided."

The Intelligence officer went off to find the Tiger and get his horse saddled up. He had reverted to his legitimate duties at once, and was not sorry that the brigadier had detailed him for this particular duty, though he felt that his mission had been designed rather as a lesson to the colonel of the Mount Nelson Light Horse than as a necessary precaution for the safety of the camp. But it took the troop a powerful long time to turn out, and when at last twenty men were mounted, they looked

for all the world as if they were a party of criminals about to be driven to the scaffold. The Tiger whispered to the Intelligence officer. "We shall have to go easy with these fellows. If we were not here, they would march out of camp with both hands above their heads. They are the class of men who will become panic-stricken at a dust-devil, and surrender to the first cock-ostrich they meet!"

This may have been an exaggeration. There were some good men in the corps, men who had fought well in the earlier days of the campaign. But they were few and far between, and as events were to show, there were not sufficient of the proper stamina to leaven the whole.

The farms which the brigadier had indicated were situated at the foot of a spur of rocky excrecence which ploughed into the veldt from the north of Minie Kloof. They were only five miles from the camp. But that five miles proved too much for the escort. Whether it was physical weakness or incipient mutiny it matters little. The men just crawled along. So slow was the progress that the Intelligence officer, afraid of being benighted, selected four of the better mounted from the troop and pressed on to his objective, leaving the escort to follow at such pace as they found convenient. The first farm lay in a small kloof right against the hillside, and the approach was so masked that the little party of scouts rode to within two hundred yards of its whitewashed front with-

out declaring themselves. A rise in the ground and a hillock gave all the cover that the Tiger deemed necessary, and he suggested that the four troopers should be sent up a donga, which would enable them to climb the reverse of another hill which overlooked the farm, while he himself went to the farm, covered by the rifle of the Intelligence officer from their present position. To the first part of the scheme the Intelligence officer agreed, but he reversed the order of the latter arrangement. Having seen the troopers well on their way, he left the Tiger to cover the advance, and rode leisurely himself towards the farm. It was a very ordinary farm — not flush with the ground, but standing in a plinth of brick like an Indian bungalow. A great solemn quietness reigned over the whole kloof, not a living soul was visible, and the foot-falls of the horse sounded strangely exaggerated as the solitary rider approached the verandah. Presently a dog stirred, trotted out into the sunlight, and barked furiously. It disturbed the inmates of the house; a girl hurriedly opened the upper swing-back of the door, looked out, and then closed the door with a bang. This was suspicious, and the Intelligence officer let his hand drop to the wooden case of the Mauser pistol strapped to his holster; his thumb pressed the catch, and he threw the pistol loose, keeping his hand upon its stock. Then to his shout of "*Wie dar!*" the

upper portion of the door was again gingerly opened. The same face appeared, that of a round blue-eyed Dutch girl. She turned her impassive gaze upon the visitor, who, by way of opening the conversation, taxed his limited knowledge of the vernacular so far as to ask for a little milk.

"Milk!" the girl answered in passable English. "Yes; I will get you milk. Just wait!"

She seemed a long time finding the milk, and the Intelligence officer began to feel the situation oppressive. He would have liked to have turned his head to see if there were any sign of his troopers being in position on the hill above him. But he had that indescribable feeling which often inspires a man with the belief that his every movement is being watched by unseen eyes. Those of you who have been tiger-shooting on foot will readily appreciate the nature of this sense. Yet, though he peered through the open door, his eyes could discern no movement or his ears any incriminating sound. Presently the girl returned with a glass of milk upon a tray. She opened the lower half of the door, and came demurely to the edge of the verandah. The Intelligence officer put out his hand to receive the glass, when in a moment the girl lowered her elbow and soused its contents full into his face.

"Hands up!" in stentorian tones from the doorway; and through a white mist of milk, the Englishman had a vision of the business end of two rifles

pointed at him at short range, held by rough bearded customers, and of a white-faced girl convulsed in laughter. The sobering effect of the metal throat of a rifle a few inches removed from your breast is considerable, and the Intelligence officer was a captured man. But for a moment only. Something swished past his ear, and a great star appeared in the white-washed plaster, just a foot above the Dutchmen's head. The Tiger had risen to the situation. The girl's laughter died out, the two men ducked, and made instinctively for the cover of the door. The Intelligence officer had an eighth of a second to make up his mind. To have been truly sensational he should have covered the Burghers with his Mauser; but he was more practical, and by the time the men recovered their equanimity he was galloping as fast as his pony could lay legs to the ground back to the hillock where the Tiger was lying ensconced. Then he realised the extent of the hornet's nest into which he had blundered. Rifles cracked to right and left of him, like stock-whips in a cattle-run. But it is hard to hit a moving body. Many who took part in the battle of Omdurman will remember how a single Emir on a scarecrow of a horse galloped unscathed along the whole length of the British division advancing round the base of Jebel Surgham, though every man in the firing-line did his best to bring him down. Similarly the Intelligence officer braved the

gauntlet, and reached temporary security round the base of the Tiger's hillock without harm. There was no time to waste. The Tiger was down to his horse and mounted almost before his officer realised he was safe.

Tiger. "Come along, sir; it's been a near thing, but we have just time if we gallop for it!"

Intelligence Officer. "But the flanking party; we must not desert them!"

T. "We can do them no good. They must take their chance—for God's sake, gallop, sir!"

The Tiger indeed spoke the truth; it was a near thing. They had not placed a hundred yards between them and the hillock when dismounted enemy were at the top, and the ground round the fugitives throwing up little puffs of dust as the bullets struck.

Their luck was in, and after a perilous three minutes, they were clear of immediate danger, as the popping of rifles from the rise in front of them gave evidence that the officer in charge of the supporting troop had risen to the occasion. If he had been a better soldier, he might have lain low, and let the fugitives entice their pursuers after them to their own destruction. But this had not occurred to the youth who had recently changed the pestle and mortar of a chemist's dispensary for the sword of mounted infantry leader, and he did his best, in a suitably excited manner.

The Tiger's story was interesting. "Just as you halted,

sir, at the farm, I caught sight of the glint of a rifle on the top of the hill which we had sent the troopers to occupy. As I knew that it could not be our own men, I at once realised that we were in for it. They had seen us coming. I knew that the troopers were lost men—the Boers would let them blunder up to the top of the kopje, and when they arrived at the top, utterly blown and useless, would disarm them without firing a shot. Everything now depended upon the chance of my having escaped notice. It was impossible to warn you without firing my rifle, so I looked round to see if I was being stalked. I could see no one on my track, so I just lay still and waited developments at the farmhouse. I saw the girl throw the milk, and I then calculated that a shot placed between you and the men would so disconcert them for the moment that you could be able to get away.

"As soon as you turned, the fat was into the fire, and I found that they were lying up for us all round. It was a mercy that they never spotted me before I fired. I suppose they concluded that five went with the flank scouts instead of four only. Anyhow, there must have been quite thirty of them, and we now know that they are there. . . ."

"Well, young feller!" said the brigadier when the Intelligence officer reported himself, "what has all the shooting been about?"

He listened to the story, and remained thoughtful for a

moment. Then he handed the Intelligence officer a message, which ran as follows :—

"From De Wet Expert, Hopetown, to O.C. New Cavalry Brigade, Prieska or vicinity.

"De Wet was at Strydenburg last night. Repeat to," &c.

Brigadier. "What do you think of that?"

Intelligence Officer. "We have lost a big thing. But may we not be in the right position to-night? It seems to me that I must have run my head right into them."

B. "I am afraid not. We have just touched up the 'red herring'; but, great Scot! what a chance has been taken from me. Argue it out. Balance the probabilities. This is what I make it. Hertzog joined De Wet at Strydenburg last night. Hertzog joined him with the information that three columns had moved out of Britstown, by way of Minie Kloof. Three columns would be too much for De Wet in his dilapidated state; so he has just thrown out a patrol to observe us, while he has struck elsewhere. If he is still intent on going south, he will pass between Britstown and De Aar. But I doubt if he tries the sea-board trick. If I know him, he will double back along his original line. He is a sly old fox. You may bet all that you are worth that you blundered into his observation patrol, and that we have lost the best chance of the whole war simply through the idiosyncrasies of a stupid old man.

I shall not trouble about your friends any more to-night!"

An hour after dark four sorry objects, stark-naked save for their vests, and with putties bound round their feet to replace their boots, staggered into camp. They were the four troopers of the Mount Nelson Light Horse which had furnished the Intelligence officer's flanking party. As the Tiger had surmised, they had fallen an easy prey to the Boers on the top of the hill. These had stripped them of all their clothes, and, after herding them in a donga for a couple of hours, had sent them back into camp with Commandant Vermaas' best compliments. They were to tell their general that De Wet would be in Britstown that night, and that he had passed within four miles of our camp with his whole force that afternoon.

"That settles it," said the brigadier. "They would not have pitched that yarn if De Wet had been really going to Britstown. You can mark my word, he has gone north."

The words were still on the brigadier's lips when a native came in with a message in cipher from the general. It read as follows—

"Reliable information points to De Wet being at Strydenburg. Concentrate there with me by midday to-morrow. I shall take the Zwingelspan Road, which will bring me out into the hills north of Strydenburg. You will take the Kalk Kraal-Grootpan Road, and install yourself on Tafel-

kop, south of the town. Arrange to have your guns in position by noon. Do not try to open up visual communication with me. Such a course might give information of our movements to the enemy. Send a receipt of this message to Zwingspan, so as to arrive not later than 10 A.M. to-morrow." Signed, "N—, Chief Staff-Officer. P.S.—Am afraid that De Wet will have taken your convoy."

Brigadier. "Was there ever a worse atrocity perpetrated than this? If he had only been man enough to have done this twenty-four hours earlier, when I implored him to do so, he might have been the greatest hero of the war by this. But here, Uncle Baker

(to the brigade-major), just you send for that saucy fellow who commands the cyclists of the Mount Nelson Light Horse, and tell him that he and his cyclists have got to fight their way into Strydenburg by 10 A.M. to-morrow. Tell him that if he gets a message off to Pretoria before 10 A.M. to-morrow, it's as good as a D.S.O. for him. Tell him he must be prepared to fight like h—l, only don't frighten him too much: just tell him enough to keep him looking about him, otherwise his gang will get captured in detail by the first Burgher they meet. He may start when he likes. If I can get a message through to K. first, it won't matter how much I mutiny afterwards!"

(*To be continued.*)

THE NEXT NAVAL BATTLE: A FORECAST.

ALTHOUGH every Briton will readily admit that the art of fighting at sea is of supreme importance to the nation, also that if either sea or land fighting had to be neglected it would be necessary to let land fighting take the second place, whilst sea fighting was carefully considered—it is a remarkable and undoubted fact that little or nothing is generally known as to how a fight at sea is likely to be conducted. Thousands of sham-fights, small and great, are carried out every year on shore in England alone. Our library shelves groan with tons and tons of literature dealing with land wars, land strategy, land tactics. Every newspaper reader has some idea, and often a very fair understanding, of the common incidents of a land war, whilst he has either no ideas at all, or the haziest possible ones, of what is likely to happen in a sea fight, and if he goes off to a library for information, he is likely to come back empty-handed and empty-headed.

Our language is a very full and complete one, and is especially well garnished with terms descriptive of a man's calling or occupation. Thus we have "soldiers," "warriors," "military men," "troops," all referring to land warfare, but there is no generic term for the man who fights afloat. Even the term Navy may be and is applied to the peaceful vessels which form the "merchant

navy." We have our Fleet certainly; but we have fishing fleets, trading fleets, and so on. We all love "Jack," but this term applies equally to the grimy A.B. in the collier's fore-castle and to the smart and highly educated chief petty officer who aims and fires a pair of 50-ton guns in the barbette of the newest battleship. In old days every seaman was perforce a fighting man. If traders found that they had too many rivals in their business, their ships might legitimately go at it hammer and tongs, literally fighting for a market, whilst their respective nations were at perfect peace. There was ample opportunity for privateering when war was declared, and when peace supervened piracy to some extent took the place of privateering. Now the majority of seamen have no more to do with fighting for their country than the railway guard or 'bus conductor, and we need some etymologist to come forward and give us a term for the man whose vocation it is to fight for his country on the sea.

Why is it that so little seems to be known as to the art of sea fighting? The way of a ship in the midst of the sea was too wonderful for Agur the son of Jakeh, so it is still; one has only to read the sworn testimony of experts in any collision case coming before the Court of Admiralty to under-

stand that, even when only two ships are concerned, and prompt investigation is made, it is by no means easy to determine exactly what happened and how it happened. One of the great difficulties is, that though ships have met, have fought, have won, or lost, as the case may be, the closest and most careful investigation frequently fails altogether in determining all the facts; nor can any reliable conclusion be arrived at as to the movements that took place, and the various factors which influenced or brought about the ascertained results.

Not only are the movements of an army absolutely snail-like as compared with the movements of a fleet, but the position and route of each unit is readily determined by the varied features of the ground, which exercise such a commanding influence on the fortunes of a land battle. Even if every battlefield consisted of an absolutely flat and featureless plain over which great masses of cavalry proceeded at a gallop in serried ranks, the several witnesses would have more points on which to fasten their recollection than those who have taken part in a sea fight, where there are no stricken men marking the place where they fell, no soil on which the marks of the struggle are clearly imprinted, but where the silent waves close in on the ship's wake in precisely the same manner whether she be a mighty warship fighting hard for her country, or a

mere yacht cruising quietly along on pleasure bent.

If we succeeded in obtaining as many data with reference to Rodney's and Nelson's tactics as we have of those of Frederick or Napoleon, we should still be at a great disadvantage in trying to inform ourselves as to naval tactics in comparison with a fellow-student who was considering army tactics. There has been no change in the methods of locomotion ashore. Infantry, cavalry, and artillery have very much the same powers and limitations in their movements as of yore. As of old, on land, rapid movement and effective fighting are incompatible. Both artillery and infantry must halt to fire, and cavalry do no harm till in actual contact. The limitations of the ground weigh just as heavily in the scale as they have always done.

But afloat there has been a complete revolution. The speed with which ships can approach each other has been doubled or trebled; there is now absolute certainty of movement in every direction, whilst of old the force that was to windward of the other might be likened to an army in an absolutely unassailable position, which had the opportunity of attacking or refusing to fight at will. The modern fleet can fight hard when advancing or retiring, under which conditions the fleets of old were harmless; and, last but not least, at the present time a single blow from ram or torpedo may decide the fate of the most important ship in a few seconds,

Within the last fifty years every great nation of the world except the United States has been engaged in at least two great land wars, whilst the Civil War in America was long and bloody enough for two: there have been besides a multitude of minor encounters, of which Great Britain has had at least a dozen, whilst the aggregate number of casualties in these wars, apart from those due to disease, must have approached a million. In the same period none of the great navies of the world have been seriously engaged, and the total casualties afloat in the minor engagements which have taken place have not reached ten thousand, or, say, at the highest estimate, only one hundredth part of those which have occurred on shore.

It therefore naturally results that the student of naval tactics is at the greatest possible disadvantage as compared with his military colleague. In lieu of the solid basis of thousands of pertinent facts, and of well-authenticated accounts of hundreds of engagements under conditions not differing so very greatly from those that prevail at present, he finds a meagre record of a few tactical incidents of very doubtful authenticity, the actors being in many cases not only unskilled in the arts of war, but also devoid of that common-sense which, our recent experience in Africa has taught us, is worth much when joined to resourcefulness and courage.

Nor has the would-be naval tactician much to draw upon

in the way of peace manœuvres or mimic actions. First of all, as in real encounters, the difficulty of obtaining reliable information is very great. The number of eyewitnesses is strictly limited, and in most cases they are pledged to secrecy, as was the case in the naval manœuvres of 1901, when an interesting "Fleet Action" took place. And even when this has not been so, it is impossible to put down accurately what happened unless a number of trained observers are intrusted with the duty of taking synchronous observations at short intervals of the relative positions of the various ships engaged. Moreover, it is no secret, after Lord Charles Beresford's detailed statements on the subject, that the number of tactical exercises, in which several ships have been engaged on each side, has been extremely few in our navy. Probably they could be counted upon the fingers of both hands. Nor is there any reason to suppose that our Navy is behind those of our neighbours in this respect. So far as is generally known, they are in much the same position as we are.

I do not wish to be misunderstood when I use the expression tactics. I consider the term should be exclusively applied to movements made in the presence of an enemy, real or imaginary, with the object of securing an advantage over him. For many years past the term steam tactics has been generally but most erroneously applied in the service to a series of evolutions which

consist mainly, if not entirely, in changing from one formation to another. If one thing is generally agreed upon with reference to the vexed question of the best fighting formation, it is that, having chosen the formation which it is decided to fight in, it is expedient not to change it. But most of the formations which are brought into the ordinary "steam tactics" are certainly useless as fighting formations, so that the various evolutions have little or nothing to do with fighting, or with tactics properly so called. It must not be assumed, however, that these manœuvres are useless. As a matter of fact, they form a valuable part of the necessary drill without which a fleet would consist of a mere mob of ships totally unfitted for any concerted action. Without such drill officers would be unaccustomed to working in close proximity to other ships and in keeping station under difficult circumstances. The utility of these evolutions consists in the practice afforded to the officers, the consequent improvement in nerve and eye, and the resulting increase in the flexibility of the fleet, but they have no right whatever to be called tactics.

The reason that tactics have been so little in evidence is not far to seek. A distinguished admiral writing to the 'Times' a few months ago gave it as his opinion that any profitable and realistic tactical manœuvring between two fleets was practically impossible. A few years ago this was the well-nigh universal opinion of the vast majority of naval officers

both in our own and other countries. Such tactical treatises as appeared prior to 1897 or thereabouts were wellnigh unanimous in treating of a charge through the enemy's formation as an almost certain incident of a naval action. In this charge ships would naturally ram each other, and would seek to interpose between parts of the enemy's formation a line of ships in close order, which the enemy in turn would attempt to break through. Thence it was expected that a more or less confused *mêlée* would result, from which each captain would have to extricate his ship as he best could, doing as much damage as possible to the enemy in the process. It is perfectly obvious that as long as this was considered the normal procedure in a naval action it could not possibly be practised. A few "tactical exercises" of this sort would send the whole of a considerable fleet to the bottom. All, therefore, that could be done was to drill away at various complicated evolutions in close order, as some preparation at any rate for the inevitable *mêlée* that was to take place.

There has been no marked change in ships in the last five years or so, yet a change has distinctly taken place in the views of those whose business it is to study naval tactics. I have never seen any very clear statement as to the reasons for advocating the charge and the *mêlée*. Indeed it was not uncommon to hear it said, "I don't care about a *mêlée* myself; but you see the enemy may not look

upon it in that light, and—there you are,” the speaker meaning that a *mêlée* was inevitable if one of two combatants desired it. And if this was objected to, there came the inevitable answer, “Then you mean that you would run away?” which commonly closed the argument, for the almost universal feeling of that day was that to run away was impossible. But in this sentiment a decided change has taken place. A careful consideration of the modern ship and her weapons has made it clear that running away may confer very considerable advantages. These will be gone into later on, but once this is admitted there is no more difficulty in proposing a retreat than was the case with the Parthians of old. These warriors being fully imbued with the fact that a retreating position was one of advantage to them, had no scruples whatever in assuming that attitude. There was no demoralisation in their ranks: on the contrary, having induced the enemy to pursue, they were confident of success, and the Parthian retreat was the common prelude to the Parthian victory.

Those who believe that the next naval battle will be fought at long rather than at short ranges do so because they mainly rely upon the gun, relegating the torpedo and ram, the typical short-range weapons, to a lower sphere, as being both of them almost as much weapons of chance as weapons of skill. It would obviously be absurd for an admiral who

believed in the superior capacity of his guns and gunners to give the guns no chance before all was hazarded by rushing within torpedo range or into the sphere of action of the ram. That other nations think with us in these respects is instanced by the fact that plans of French battleships have been published which show no ram, and the latest American battleships are not to carry torpedoes.

Directly it is conceded that the gun is the principal weapon, the armoured ship takes a stride forward as compared with the unarmoured ship. Put a 15,000-ton battleship abreast a cruiser of less than one-third her size. At 500 yards range, if both of them have submerged torpedo-tubes, they will mutually sink each other. But at 5000 yards the battleship would soon dispose of the cruiser, every hit going home, whilst the cruiser's projectiles would not penetrate or seriously injure the battleship. Such examples as we have of naval warfare since the introduction of armour point decisively to its great value. Armour, indeed, is the direct product of war experience. It took its rise from the experience of the ships in the Crimean war, where it was found that, whereas without armour they could not stand up against shore batteries, the introduction of armour completely turned the scale. In the American Civil War the value of armour was greatly accentuated. So far from it turning out a foolhardy thing for the *Merrimac* to attack a squadron

at least four times as powerful as she was in number of guns and weight of metal, her armour proved of such value that the unarmoured ships, notwithstanding their numerous guns, had no chance against her. But for the appearance of the Monitor she would have destroyed all her opponents. Later experience has all pointed in the same direction. In the old wars of 1800, &c., "more guns" was the constant cry. Latterly it has rather been "more armour." Here we can get some little help from recent experience ashore. The soldier's armour is not of iron but of earth and stone, whether natural or artificial. Every page of recent war history points to the importance of "cover." It matters not whether this cover be material or simply a screen that disconcerts the enemy's aim; the important point is that it is efficacious in fending off the enemy's fire, and herein it resembles armour.

In marshalling our ships for the next naval battle we shall first muster all the armoured ships that we can lay our hands on. But is an unarmoured ship of no service? To which another question may well be put—What is an unarmoured ship? And the answer must be that all ships are more or less unarmoured. The heaviest battleship, with 5000 tons of armour, is still in measure vulnerable, and the attacks of an opponent's shot and shells, especially those coming from the big guns, cannot be disregarded. And the smallest

cruiser is "protected" (by a sloping steel deck) from the effect of shell that would have sunk one of the Merrimac's opponents. Again, many of the "armoured cruisers" now building are better armoured than the battleships of fifteen years ago. And seeing that we shall have to take such ships as are ready to our hands, it seems most likely that, as at Lissa, the Yalu, and Santiago, ships of all sorts and sizes, large and small, fast and slow, armoured and unarmoured, will take their part in the next naval battle.

When we come to a consideration of the circumstances leading up to our battle we have rather more help from naval history than we had before. In looking back it is commonly found to be the case that one of the opponents would have preferred not to fight, at any rate not just there and then. The last thing that Brueys wished to do was to fight it out there and then when Nelson swooped down upon him in Aboukir Bay. On the morning of Trafalgar, October 21, Villeneuve apparently wished himself back in Cadiz. It is true that Suffren and Hughes both wished to fight, as did also Keppel and d'Orvilliers, but this was the exception rather than the rule, and in all the three latest sea fights on any scale—Lissa, the Yalu, Santiago—the beaten side would have preferred to postpone or to altogether forgo the engagement. In a case of this kind the speed of the ships is a most material point.

The fleet which has the speed can fight or not at its pleasure, whereas the slower fleet has no option in the matter. Of old there was never much difference in the speed of ships. Every fleet comprised both fast and slow ships; but the difference of speed was slight, and the faster ships of one fleet could always count on catching the slower ships of a rival. This is no longer the case. It is a comparatively simple matter for any nation that has a respectable navy to collect a fleet of fast ships which could count with considerable certainty on having a speed materially higher than that of any collection of average ships. But the higher the speed aimed at the smaller the fast fleet would become; and, conversely, the stronger and more numerous a fleet, the greater the probability that slow ships would have to be included. How much scope there is at present for differentiating between fast and slow ships in forming a fleet is evidenced by the fact that the speed of armoured ships which might take part in the fleet action of to-morrow varies as much as 9 knots per hour. However, the high limit of speed seems wellnigh to have been reached, and as slow ships are no longer being built, it seems that the existence of such speeds as 13 knots and 22 knots concurrently is not likely to be permanent. Still, this is the state of things at present, and we must expect in the next war to find that small bodies of perhaps four

to eight very fast ships will be formed, which will refuse action with any stronger force, but which will swoop down upon any weaker squadron which they might encounter—that is to say, the fast fleet would not engage unless they considered there was a fair probability of victory. This type of action would be scarcely worth going into if there was an overwhelming force against a much weaker one; but if the strength of the slow fleet had been underestimated by their rivals, there might still be a hard fight, and a little time may not unprofitably be spent in making a forecast as to the various phases of the encounter.

Considerations of time and place will always be of the highest importance in war. If the hours of darkness are rapidly approaching, or the enemy has a port of refuge near at hand,—both of which circumstances were present at Trafalgar,—it would be necessary to force the action to a far greater extent than if the encounter took place on a summer's morning and in the open sea—as was the case in Howe's action of the 1st of June.

The initiative rests with the faster fleet. What are they likely to do? As in all fighting, whether afloat or ashore, the battle may be divided into the advance and the encounter. On shore the formation for the advance is greatly influenced by the lie of the ground and the nature of the roads. The speed of the advance being so much greater on the roads,

especially for the artillery, it is often expedient to advance with a narrow front in order to bring up the various units rapidly without over-exertion, for worn-out men are of little value on the battlefield. None of these considerations have the least weight afloat. An advance may be made just as easily with a broad front as a narrow one, or, to adopt military phraseology, there is nothing to prevent deployment at the earliest possible moment—i.e., immediately the enemy is sighted. It is quite possible that some of my readers may remark here, that the diagrams which they have seen of a fleet advancing towards the enemy commonly depict the admiral's ship as leading a long line straight up to the point of attack. Quite true, but I should doubt if any of these diagrams were of very recent date, or if so they were copies of older ones. The soldier knows well enough that the head of a column of route coming under the fire of an extended line thereby courts almost certain demoralisation and defeat. A considerable period must needs elapse before the rear can come up to the assistance of the leading companies, during which time the enemy has a great advantage. Exactly the same reasoning holds good for a fleet. If the leading ship comes under fire when the fleet are in line ahead standing towards the enemy, the rear are of necessity for some time out of action.

There is, therefore, the

strongest reason that the advance should be made with ships more or less abreast and not astern of each other. Similarly if the slow fleet which is acting on the defensive, and is presumably seeking to postpone or withdraw from the fight, has left the rear ship nearer to the enemy than her consorts, it will be needful to drop back in support, and we shall thus get two bodies of ships each in line abreast, the fast ones being in pursuit and following in the wake of their flying enemy. As a rough rule, it may be assumed that the end-on fire of an ordinary ship is about half the broadside or maximum fire. Therefore, although neither fleet can exercise its maximum power when thus chasing and being chased, an action might be begun, continued, and ended in this manner, as indeed was in measure the case with the fight off Santiago, except that neither side formed their fleet in any definite order; and it was a case of *sauve qui peut* for the Spaniards, and a general chase for the Americans.

Assuming that the ships are of the normal type, in which the fire ahead is equal to that astern, then when one fleet is following the other they are tactically on an equality as regards the number of guns bearing; but the stern guns of the evading fleet are not likely to be impeded by spray, which might somewhat interfere with the bow guns of the chasing ships. The effect of the smoke from the funnels of the slow fleet would probably be about equal; some of the ships in each fleet would be hid

from their opponents. But there would remain a sufficiency of ships visible at which to fire.

Of old, in a chase the issue of the battle frequently turned on the destruction of the motive power. The masts and yards of the sailing-ship were much exposed, and were constantly shot away, and this notwithstanding that both bow and stern fire was of the feeblest character. It is often assumed that in a present-day fight the engines will similarly be disabled. But this is contrary to both experience and common-sense. The number of ships fitted with a protective deck over the engines that have been under fire is but small, except at the Yalu and at Santiago, yet in nearly all cases the engines escaped without injury. The Peruvian ironclad *Huascar* had a very heavy hammering from the Chilean *Cochrane* and *Encalada*, and when she surrendered she had all her guns disabled, and a large proportion of her crew *hors de combat*, but, though she had no armoured deck, her engines were intact. A break-down in some of the slowest ships where the engines and boilers are being forced seems the most likely casualty, but not to be counted on by any means. If one of the slow ships should break down, she would drop into the ranks of the enemy; but even so she would have a fair chance of torpedoing one or more ships before her colours came down. A break-down in the chasing fleet would simply mean one less in action.

If the faster fleet persistently followed the slower one they would get closer and closer, and presently come within reach of torpedoes. The range of the latest pattern torpedo is about a mile—that is to say, it will run a mile from the spot where it enters the water. But if dropped from an opponent ahead, the ship fired at assists the torpedo by running towards it. Thus a torpedo can easily hit a ship which was a mile and a half off when fired at, for the ship fired at will run at least half a mile towards the torpedo before the latter can run a mile. In the two minutes odd which elapses between the firing of the torpedo and its hitting, the firing ship will have moved off half a mile or so, and the opponents are still a mile and a half apart when the torpedo strikes. The chasing ships cannot fire any torpedoes in reply, as they must be within half a mile or less before there is any chance that the fastest torpedo will overtake a ship that is running away.

Seeing that the torpedo precludes any approach to moderate or short ranges from astern, the fast fleet will probably ease engines when fairly within range, say at 3500 to 4000 yards, and by concentrating their fire on the most vulnerable ships opposed to them, will endeavour to capture their opponents one by one. If the fire of the slow fleet proved too heavy for the chasing ships, the action would have to be abandoned, and the reserve of speed available in the fast fleet would be likely to take their damaged

ships successfully out of action. In one respect the following fleet is likely to receive greater damage than that which is running away, for the former, presenting their bows to the fire of their opponents, would get a number of hits forward, which are more difficult to plug, and admit more water than corresponding holes aft, where the water does not run up the side as it does towards the bows. If a number of the faster ships were thus crippled, the tables would be turned, and the whilom faster fleet would take up the retreating position at such a speed as the leaking ships could maintain.

It is by no means necessary that the slower fleet when overtaken and compelled to fight should continue the retreat as above described. They might prefer to trust to their broad-side fire. In this case, as soon as their fast opponents were fairly within range, they would turn into line ahead, following each other across the track of the advancing enemy. This was essentially the movement carried out by the Japanese at the opening of the Yalu action. If the lines are very long as compared with the distance that separates them when the turn is made, the tail of the crossing line will be run into by the flank of the fast fleet. This actually happened at the Yalu. But if the range be long and the lines short there is no reason that contact, or even close quarters, should result. The Japanese at the Yalu made no use of torpedoes; though when the Chinese

closed the tail of their line they might have done so with great advantage. Indeed, it is not the following fleet that gets the best of the manoeuvre alluded to above, for the torpedo should score heavily on the advancing ships—which would be at a disadvantage in the return torpedo fire. Scarcely any of the latest ships can fire torpedoes ahead, and when they do so they are unreliable. Though the crossing ships would not be running away from the torpedoes fired at them, they would not be approaching them, as their opponents would be.

The question of what is an effective range for the guns of a fleet is at the present time a very open one. From reports which have appeared from time to time in the press, it seems that the ranges at which peace practice takes place in the British and French navies varies from 1000 to 5000 yards. Some accounts have appeared of practice at higher ranges than 5000 yards, but these probably refer to something more in the nature of an isolated experiment than of regular instructional practice. The Americans seem to have fired both at Santiago and Manila at fully 6000 yards; but it is extremely doubtful if many hits were recorded at this range. The general consensus of opinion at present seems to be that 4000 yards is decidedly an effective range, and that 5000 yards may prove so for the larger guns, but that firing at 6000 yards is at best a very random affair. Naturally such minor weapons as

3-pounders to 12-pounders have considerably less range than their heavier brethren, and it is generally conceded that it is of little use firing with them at anything over 3500 yards or thereabouts. The usual interval between ships in a line is about 400 yards, so that a line of twelve ships would occupy 4400 yards. Except for very large fleets it is therefore likely that the fleets will be separated by more than the length of the line when fire is opened, so that if the retreating fleet turns across the pursuing one it is not likely that we shall have the contact of rear and flank that took place at the Yalu.

Nor if the leading fleet turns its broadside is there any good and sufficient reason for the following one to continue coming straight on. Half the gunfire is sacrificed by turning the bows to an opponent's broadside, and a turn of ninety degrees will not only double the rate of fire, but will bring fresh and untouched guns into use. So immediately one fleet turns its broadside, there is every probability that the other will do the same.

If this forecast be accurate we get a not dissimilar state of affairs to that which prevailed two hundred years ago—namely, two lines of ships drawn up parallel to each other, and fighting it out with broadside fire. But in very many respects there are great divergencies. Byng was shot for failing to bring the bulk of his fleet within effective range. Many of the ships whose fire was then declared to be in-

effective were apparently within 600 to 800 yards of their opponents. In the great battles which took place between 1794 and 1805 no decisive results seem to have been obtained outside 400 yards, and much of the fighting was inside 100 yards. So that in the present day it may be said that the effective range has increased from six to tenfold. Of old there was little choice for the gunner as to his target. His gun had a very small arc of training, and the enemy immediately opposite to him was close enough to occupy the whole of this arc. He perhaps had the option of firing at her bows or stern, but seldom more. At present it would be a common thing to see six ships within the arc of fire, any of which could be fired at if desired. Of old it was not an easy matter to keep two ships steadily firing at a single enemy. Now it will be a simple matter for six to fire at one if the admiral wishes it.

In the old line of battle it was found essential to keep the speed very low, or even to "heave to" and stop altogether, otherwise there was great straggling, giving to a closed-up enemy the opportunity of bringing his whole force to bear in close order on the strung-out fragment of the fleet opposed to him. Moreover, from the fact that the effective range was very short, the only way of assisting a consort was to come close up to her—often a very long process when the wind was light and the initial separation considerable. Now the

speed is so great that a very long line can be drawn up in an entirely fresh direction in ten minutes. Moreover, it is nothing out of the way in the present day for two ships 3000 yards apart in the line to be concentrating their fire on the same opponent. In fact, it is no longer necessary to go to the assistance of a consort who may need help; all that is required is to turn the guns in the required direction. Of old an advantage of position once gained might prove absolutely decisive, as happened at Trafalgar when the Allied van was unable to come to the succour of the centre and rear, on which the English attack was made, until all was practically over. Thus some half-dozen ships never got into action at all. With the long range, wide arcs of fire, and rapid movements of the present day such a state of things is impossible. Whilst it is easier to concentrate on some fraction of the enemy than of old, it is also far easier to counteract that concentration. Much seamanship was required 100 years ago in order to bring the whole of a fleet into action. Indeed there is scarce a single instance of this being actually accomplished. Even such blunders as the worst of the leaders who have commanded in recent sea fights, the Chinese for example, have at least managed this, and there is every probability that in future every ship which wishes to get into action will succeed in doing so.

If we suppose that the two fleets which are drawn up opposite to each other are of

greatly unequal speed, will it not be easy for the faster fleet to utilise its speed to seize a position of advantage—that is to say, to bring its line into action across the extremity of the opposing line, to outflank it in fact, or, as Sir George Tryon styled it, to cross the T? This is the kind of problem that can only be solved by reference to peace practice and war-game manoeuvres. At first sight it appears almost certain that speed should give a great advantage in manoeuvring for position. But the problem cannot be disposed of in this off-hand fashion. Let us assume that a slow fleet of 13 knots' speed, two miles long, has its line drawn up east and west, whilst an opposing fleet of the same length, but of 18½ knots' speed, is bearing down from the eastward, with its line north and south. When at 7000 yards' range (3½ sea miles), the ships of the slow fleet turn together to the west, and then follow their leader north. When the latter has run two miles (the length of the line), the slow fleet will be found parallel to its rival. The ship at the old eastern extremity of the line—now the southern end—will have run two miles away from the enemy, whilst the latter ran three miles towards her, and the distance will have decreased from 7000 to 5000 yards. When this latter range was reached, the slow fleet was tactically in an equal position, and what happened outside 5000 yards was of no moment, for the nearest ships were out of effective range. With a fairly

alert enemy, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to cross the T at the beginning of an action, even when speeds differ so enormously as 13 and 18½. And if two lines start parallel, and one begins to race ahead of the other with the idea of getting round the flank, the slower line will curve slightly away from the other, which will then require all its speed to keep running round a circle of large diameter, whilst its slow opponent works on a concentric smaller circle within the larger arc. Speed may be worth something, but straight shooting ought to be worth a great deal more.

I have but little space left, and I must not let my readers go away with the idea that a modern naval action is a very simple affair. It might be so if only six to ten similar ships were engaged on each side. But there may very well be thirty to fifty, composed of battleships, cruisers, and torpedo craft in about equal proportions. What we have said above shows that the battleships ought to fight in one line, so as to support each other. But could twenty work in one line? Nelson came to the conclusion that in his day something like fifteen to twenty was the limit. What is the limit now? It appears to be quite unsettled. And, supposing we get all our battleships into one line, where are the cruisers to go? A first- or second-class cruiser can throw from three-quarters to a quarter the weight of metal thrown by a battleship, but she is not nearly as well

armoured. Can an admiral afford to send his cruisers out of range, and thus seriously diminish his fire? On the other hand, is it worth while risking the loss of ships which cannot be replaced, and which are invaluable for other duties than fighting battleships? All that can be said is, that all history shows that it is not an easy matter to deliberately keep a fighting force, however feeble, out of action. The behaviour of the frigates of a hundred years ago is rather the exception that proves the rule. A century of hard fighting had demonstrated that in a general action the frigate could effect but little, and consequently a custom of war sprang up in accordance with which there was a tacit agreement to leave frigates unmolested, always provided that they took no part in the action.

At present opinions are very much divided. There is hardly any experience to go upon; still what there is points in the direction of cruisers taking their share in the fight. If one of two commanders decided to bring his cruisers into action, his opponent could scarcely hold his back. Besides this, the smallest cruiser can torpedo a battleship, so that the latter could not afford to leave her unmolested if she came within range. It therefore seems extremely probable that for some time to come cruisers will take their part, and will continue to do so until the inutility of this procedure has been settled by the experience of several hard fights. But where should the cruisers go,

and what should they try to do? Are they to fight battleships, or only to engage cruisers like themselves? To all these questions it is not pretended that any decided answer can be given. The frigate at one time fought in the same line of battle as the two- or three-decker, but she was so liable to be early knocked out, leaving a nasty gap in the line, that it was found better to detach her altogether. The same argument holds now against putting cruisers in the same line as the battleships, and though strong cruisers might in some cases be advantageously placed in the main "line," it seems much more likely that the cruisers which join in a fight will work independently. Since the cruisers have their armament disposed on the same general principles as the battleships, there is the same argument for their forming line with their broadsides towards the enemy. But the cruisers' line will have to keep clear of their battleship consorts, and its task will not be an easy one, if it is to do so, and at the same time to make its weight felt. The general idea seems to be that the cruisers will be stationed so as to fire past the ends of the battle line. They will thus to some extent support the flanks of the line, always the weakest points, and those to the rear would be able to assist any battleship that had fallen out of the line, and if necessary take her in tow.

Besides the cruisers there are the torpedo craft. Under this

category I would include all vessels which are weak in gun-power and are poorly protected against gun-fire, but are provided with torpedoes. As a rule their torpedo-tubes are also unprotected, but there are a few notable exceptions, such as the German *Gazelle* class, which, though so small and weakly armed that they are scarcely fit to lie in the cruisers' line, yet carry submerged torpedoes. The aim of the torpedo craft is to get within torpedo range—say, a mile or less—of the enemy's battleship line, and to arrive at this position with torpedo armament intact. What the torpedo craft fears most is the quick-firing gun. Therefore, if for any reason the battleship's quick-firers are rendered inefficient, whether temporarily or otherwise, the torpedo craft gets a chance of rushing in to torpedoing distance, whence she fires from one to four torpedoes according to her armament, and retires as speedily as possible.

It has long been recognised that darkness or fog befriends the torpedo craft, since the straight shooting of the guns which they fear is thereby impaired. In the same way occasions will doubtless occur in a general action when some portion of the battleship line is exposed to a heavy fire, which will more or less completely silence the unprotected quick-firers, and thus give to the torpedo craft an opportunity of getting in to torpedo range without receiving serious injury. The greatest skill, however, will be necessary to seize

the opportune moment. Owing to their vulnerability, the normal position of the torpedo craft must be from 5000 to 6000 yards away from the enemy's line. It is necessary that they should be able from this position to so follow the progress of the fight that they should intervene at the right point and at the right moment. Moreover, the attack should be delivered against those ships whose capture is improbable. It is decidedly preferable to capture a ship than to sink her, and the torpedo craft that sends a probable prize to the bottom when on the point of striking her colours has done more harm than good.

To sum up. In the next naval battle the ships engaged will be arranged in three categories. Nearest to the enemy's array will be the battleships, drawn up in one line in close order as of old: they will, as a rule, follow each other, just in the same way as did the ships of a century ago, but at a high speed in lieu of a low one. Unlike the old liners, the modern battleships will not come to close quarters. They will use their guns, not at

musket-shot range, or, say, 200 yards, but at ranges approaching 3000 to 4000 yards. They will not come within 2000 yards of their opponent, lest they be torpedoed.

Farther from the enemy than the battle-line will be the cruisers, trusting mainly to guns, as do their heavy consorts, but keeping at a greater range, in order to get the protection which distance will always give. If a favourable chance offers, they might support the torpedo craft in a dash at the enemy's battle-line.

Out of range altogether will be the torpedo craft, ready to dash in if a favourable opportunity offers, but taking no risks early in the action lest their usefulness should be lost when their services are required.

In the proper conduct and co-operation of the various classes of ships the greatest skill and experience will be necessary, and it is above all things desirable that methods should be devised of constantly exercising in peace the various movements that may be required in war.

ACTIVE LIST.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXLIIL

SEPTEMBER 1902.

VOL. CLXXII.

MONTENEGRIN SKETCHES.

I. A WALK IN THE MOUNTAINS.

It is not good to walk in Montenegro, that is to say, for long distances, either for reasons of economy or for one's health. Rather accord with the horse-owner, however exorbitant may appear the terms, or spend a few hours more on the journey and go the roundabout way by road.

Such advice I mentally swear to give any unsuspecting foreigner should I ever reach Virpazar alive. I look at my watch and find it is ten o'clock. By this time they assured me last night in Cetinje that I should be eating a sumptuous breakfast at Vir, if I got off by 5 A.M. I had started before five, in a steady drizzle, accompanied by a guide who had driven me to distraction the night before. We had spoken of terms, and I had offered one

gulden fifty kreutzers. For a five hours' walk this was liberal payment, but he had demanded twice the amount. I remained seemingly firm, meaning to go eventually as far as two guldens. He gazed at me reproachfully, and then said he was not sure of waking at four o'clock—could he sleep in my house? I suggested it to Reinwein, my worthy landlord, who became abusive and put my feelings into strong, but picturesque language. A Montenegrin not able to rise at four o'clock. It was too absurd. I offered with much sarcasm my alarum clock; but the jest fell flat, as he had never heard of one. Then he reverted to the question of payment, and narrated at length the expenses he would incur by travelling with me to Vir. There was his bed to pay for

that night, food for the next day, and damages to shoe-leather, until I began to wonder at this strange man and the workings of his intricate brain. Again I used sarcasm, and inquired if I should pay his rent at home for the coming quarter as well. It struck him as a good idea, and his countenance brightened. Then it was that I lost all patience and demanded back the fifty kreutzers hand money I had given him, saying I would find the way alone.

"That thou canst not do, Gospodin. Give me one gulden sixty kreutzers and I will be with thee at half-past four to-morrow. Dost thou agree?"

And this was the way this intelligent man schemed to get an extra five farthings out of me. I had lost half an hour and my temper.

As the clock of the old monastery chimed out five we had already climbed out of the valley of Cetinje. Two hours later we halted at a primitive khān (Montenegrins use the word *hān* instead of the more universally known word "*khān*") for coffee, with an egg beaten up into a fine cream as a substitute for milk.

"How far from here?" I asked on leaving.

"Three hours for thee, two for a Montenegrin," was the answer, and it had irritated me; so, in a blinding snow-storm (on the 1st of May), I did my best to make the pace. I wonder to-day that I did not break my neck down that awful path into the valley below. It was a hillside to be negotiated with care and

at leisure, not to be skipped down as if one was hurrying down an ordinary flight of stairs. My guide leapt blithely from one jagged point to another, never slipping, as sure-footed as a mountain goat, waiting for me every hundred yards with an apologetic look as I stumbled and slid after him. Not only are these paths used by human beings and goats, but also by mountain torrents in wet weather.

And now it was ten o'clock, Vir was nowhere in sight, and a feeling of great wrath arose within me as I contemplated the sole of one of my boots flapping idly in the wind. Both heels looked as if they had been chopped at with an axe, and my feet felt as if they had been inside during the operation. Thoughts of missing the diligence from Vir to Antivari assail me. It only goes every other day, and if I find it gone, that means another weary climb on foot over the Sutormann Pass, down to the coast beyond, for I wish to catch the weekly steamer to Cattaro. It does not do to miss connections in out-of-the-way places like Vir.

We push on and meet a youth. We greet each other fervently.

"It is three-quarters of an hour away," he answers. "May God go with ye!"

I am tempted to whistle a merry tune, for I can last another hour, and so can my boots. It was too soon to whistle, and it made my guide whistle too,—it is funny how catching whistling is,—which

set my teeth on edge. Montenegrins have no idea of a tune, and confine themselves to a compass of four or five half tones. It is distracting to a point of madness after ten minutes.

Eleven o'clock, and we are still bounding along a seesaw path, and have crossed and recrossed the swollen river a dozen times with a skill which Blondin would have admitted. I am now indifferent to personal danger. What matter if I miss my footing on the rocks jutting out of the foaming stream or stumble on the precipice above, death will be equally quick. And the diligence leaves at twelve.

The scenery was probably magnificent, now and then I catch glimpses of it, great hills towering above me on either side; but my feet are far too tender to permit my eyes to wander above me. I begin to talk to myself aloud, in English, so as not to shock my simple guide. Eleven-thirty, and I tap my revolver with a murderous longing to kill all the people who said the journey could be accomplished with ease in five hours. They had given me to understand that to do it in six hours we should have to dawdle by the way, to pick flowers and smoke cigarettes at the more beautiful spots. On a macadamised road and dead level it might be done in five hours, but then a Montenegrin scorns a well-made road. He infinitely prefers to skip like a young ram in the hills, which metaphor whiles away another ten minutes, as it does not seem quite

right. The steeper the path and the more strewn with rock and boulders, the faster he goes on his way rejoicing.

It is twelve, and now I am apathetic. I do not call aloud to myself any longer, to the mystification of my guide, who always thought I was trying to keep up a conversation with him. I am oblivious of the nails running into my heels, and I do not place my feet with the care I did when a year ago I left Cetinje one cold and dismal morning full of hope and pride in my youthful vigour. The most casual observer will notice, too, that my step has lost its wonted elasticity, and that a lethargy has come upon me making my movements mechanical. I muster up a little energy to address my guide.

"Go, thou liar and son of liar. Hurry forward to the town, and if by any chance the post is still there, stand by the driver with thy revolver till I come."

He springs forward,—I had hoped he would kill me for the insult,—and I am left to plod wearily after him. At last I see the little cluster of houses of Vir. At twelve-thirty I stagger into the market-place.

"The diligence is still here," says my guide, who has run lightly towards me. I breathe a prayer of thankfulness and of repentance for the remarks I have made, which might have blighted the very trees.

"But it is full," he adds as an after-thought.

I do not faint, I do not even swear,—dumbly I walk to the inn. A man I know from for-

mer visits, the village jack-of-all-trades, follows me.

"Cut them off," I say as he proceeds to unlace what were a few hours ago a pair of strong boots, ironically called in other lands shooting-boots, suitable for mountaineering and long walking tours. "Thou mayst keep them and the other things too." These were once a pair of socks.

Then a fair maiden comes in with a tub of warm water and insists on tenderly bathing my poor feet. At any other time

I should have indignantly refused her kindly ministrations.

"Thy feet are very beautiful," she says as she dries them on a soft towel; "but they are not fitted for our stony paths. Thou hast never walked barefooted."

"Indeed," I answer mechanically. "I thought I had to-day."

Then cramp in various parts of my body precludes further intelligent conversation, and I am discreetly left alone with my thoughts.

II. EVENING ON THE LAKE OF SCUTARI.

The heat of the day has passed. With my head upon a pillow of coats I lay at full length on the bottom of the canoe, lazily listening to the swish of the water as my paddlers slowly wind in and out of a narrow channel. A dreamy peace pervades the scene, which so strongly resembles a deserted backwater of the Thames. The stillness is unbroken save by an occasional far-away hail of fishermen, or the grating croak of a grey heron in the bushes. Up in the bows, out of reach of temptation, lies my gun.

Knowing my queer tastes, the ancient mariner at the stern turns sharply inwards, and in a few seconds we are floating in a vast inundated forest. Gnarled and twisted trunks and fantastic branches surround us, and bow takes in his paddle, swinging us along cleverly with his hands. It is a quaint sight, this submerged

woodland glade. It seems unreal and fairy-like. A leafy canopy shuts out the heavens, and all is shrouded in a gloomy mysterious light.

Ever nearer comes a chorus of hoarse unmusical croaking as we approach a colony of grey heron. We come so noiselessly that the birds do not perceive us, and under their round, flat-bottomed nests we gaze unnoticed at the ungainly occupants. Their long necks, lanky legs, and unpleasantly grating voices are hard to compare with the graceful bird skimming with steady rhythm, neck drawn and legs trailing behind, across the wide blue heavens.

Unlike their white brethren, the crane, they build their colonies in the most accessible places, knowing that neither their flesh nor feathers are valuable. The air is full of the whirr of wings as the parent birds soar homewards, circling above the tree-tops

before finally returning to the bosom of their families. We pass on, and now the forest thins as we near the open water once more. Another vigorous push and we are out upon the great lake. Not a breath of wind disturbs its glassy surface, which sparkles refreshingly in the setting sun.

The helmsman looks at me interrogatively and I nod. It is getting late, and there are those duck for supper. We round the apex of the forest, and there is the tiny chapel and living house of the Monastery of Vranjina, my temporary home. How pretty it looks, perched half-way up the steeply sloping hillside! There is a pleasant feeling of substantiality about the grey stone buildings, the rocky hill, and the sturdy green trees after the watery islands and swamps of the lake.

Some fishermen preparing to camp on the island hail us, as we would pass, wishing us a good evening. One man comes down to the water's edge and beckons to me.

"What wouldst thou, Mirko?" I call, for he is well known to me.

"Wilt thou not share our supper, Gospodin?" he answers. "We have caught some splendid fish."

It is a beautiful picture. Groups of men are busily engaged in preparing the frugal meal; some are fetching wood and lighting small fires, while others are cleaning the fish or mending nets. They are all fine big men, brown as berries, and clad in the tattered red-

and - blue national costume. One group sings a wailing ditty, and the long-drawn-out tones go pealing over the lake, while behind them the hillside rises steeply into the clear evening air.

I take my gun and land, for the scene pleases me—it is also really nearer to the monastery. Mirko gravely shakes my hand and learns with evident disappointment that I cannot eat with him. He reminds me how often he has accepted my hospitality, and yet I always refuse his. I comfort him with assurances that I will certainly visit him in his home, though mentally I pray that I may be spared this ordeal. Invitations to the houses of enthusiastically friendly peasants are not to be lightly accepted unless one is possessed of the digestive powers of an ostrich and the capacity of a Falstaff. But my friend does not let me go without further mark of his favour. He selects the largest fish and ceremoniously presents it to me, while others draw near with an enormous black bottle.

"To prevent fever," says one. "For the appetite," says another tempter, pouring out a small tumbler of spirits. "Long life and health!" he continues, giving it to me, and hastily I swallow it. Then we all shake hands, and I wish them a good night in God's keeping, and to their melodious and pious answers I take my leave. The singing follows me up my rocky path towards the monastery.

I find the good priest before the chapel on the little plateau that commands such a grand

view of the lake. He is clad in the national garb, his holy profession only proclaimed by his long hair and beard and tiny black cap. His face is grave and tender, and he smiles as he sees me, wishing me "Bon soir." The good man is very proud of his French, though his vocabulary does not consist of more than a dozen words. I disappear round a projecting rock, and as I approach him from behind noiselessly, over the rich carpet of grass, I see that he has my carbine and is taking aim at various objects in the lake. Thus have I often surprised him, for he has all the Montenegrin love of firearms and will while away hours firing imaginary shots. This evening I have a magazine in my pocket. I slip it into the carbine.

"At what shall we shoot?" I ask. He shakes his head as I smilingly offer him the carbine. He will not shoot himself in reality, but I delight in tempting him.

"At that stump at the end of the willows. Or is it too far for thee? It must be five hundred yards."

I nod approvingly, for Montenegrins are wonderful judges of distance, and adjusting the sight I seat myself beside him.

"Take a fine sight," he murmurs in my ear. "It is less than five hundred."

The rifle cracks and a jet of water spurts beside the stump.

"A good shot," he nods. "Thou canst shoot like a Montenegrin."

It is the greatest compli-

ment that he can pay, and he says it every time I shoot well. Silently I place the weapon in his hands, ready for the next shot. Mechanically he takes aim and—bang—again that tiny column of water spurts up, but not so near the stump as mine. The worthy priest rubs his shoulder and looks at me reproachfully.

"I forgot that it was loaded," he says; but his features relax as he meets my laughing face. I reload for him, and he takes it again, this time with a deprecatory shrug of his shoulders.

"Ah, but the Gospodin Pōp has not forgotten," says a voice behind us. It was a splendid shot, and an old man, house-servant and sacristan, who has approached us from the chapel, rubs his hands gleefully, challenging me with his eyes to do better if I can. The priest's tan darkens into what would be a blush in a fair-skinned man, and gives me back the carbine with the air of a man putting sin behind him. Then he rises with a murmured apology and departs with his aged factotum, leaving me alone with the grandeur of the evening view. The Albanian Alps are bathed in a pink light, standing out so clearly that they seem almost within rifle-shot. Yet miles of glassy lake and vast swamp separate us. Above the willow islands at my feet a few belated crane are circling, their white plumage showing up vividly against the deep green of the trees. The sun is sinking rapidly behind the rugged

Rumija, whose edges are silhouetted into almost painful sharpness in the crimson glow.

The singing of the fishermen in the distance would seem if anything rather to heighten the feeling of solitariness and utter stillness, and a sweet peace steals over me. Harshly the voice of Stefan calls me back to earth and to supper. Regretfully I enter the refectory and take my seat beside the priest, who is eyeing hungrily the roast duck before him. I know he is blessing me—firstly for breaking his solitude, and

secondly for insisting on meals of meat every day, of which he in courtesy is bound to partake.

"'Tis better than goats' cheese and maize bread," I say with a profane wink at the hermit. The answer is indistinct, as from one whose mouth is full; but he gratefully fills my glass with wine such as is not to be had for love or money in the whole countryside.

"Thanks," I say.

"To God the thanks," he answers reprovingly.

III. OSTROG: THE ARRIVAL.

The heavy post-diligence rolls away towards Nikšić with a merry farewell from the bluff driver and many pious commendations to St Vasil from the occupants of the coach. The five hours' drive from Podgorica had been an eventful one even for Montenegro. Firstly, we had driven through a terrible thunder-storm, which had made the much-coveted box-seat rather a disadvantage than otherwise. In spite of umbrellas kindly handed out of the window by fair Montenegrins, the partial use of the driver's oilskins, and my own so-called waterproof coat, the rain was not to be denied. An old gentleman inside, with his wife and two pretty daughters, had been quite distressed, and invited me fervently and oft to squeeze in with them, a request which received much mute support from the maidens, who blushed sweetly as

their father pointed to the limited space between them. But I was thoroughly wet, and I nobly refused the temptation.

Then I had lost my servant Stefan, who had preceded me on horseback, and had evidently only too willingly sought the shelter of a wayside hān. Knowing him from former experiences, I resigned myself to the loss of his services for the best part of the day.

In the little town of Danilovgrad we had halted for half an hour while the horses were changed. My friend the doctor from Podgorica had charged into me, buried in a huge umbrella, as, by an acrobatic feat of balancing, I attempted to run the water out of one of my top-boots. When he saw who it was he apologised, explaining that for two nights he had had no sleep. Two evenings ago he had been ruthlessly torn from our midst

by a telegram informing him that a man had been wounded by an axe in this town, and he had hurried off on horseback to his help. I conjectured that this man had kept the doctor up two nights.

"Oh, *he* is bandaged up and doing well," said the doctor; "but last night a man has been shot. His enemy met him on the street and promptly put a bullet through his stomach. He is on the point of death, though I have done what I could for him." At that moment the commandant came up with a crowd of armed men, for the dying man's friends were excited.

"The place is in a state of revolution," said the doctor, hurrying off, and a moment later the driver of the Montenegrin post called to me. As we drove out of the town I saw the doctor entering a small house surrounded by a group of earnest men. From an upper window an old man with a white strained face looked down on the rain-swept road, and on his shoulders wept a young woman. I saw her shoulders heaving convulsively, and I shuddered as I glanced at the next window with its drawn curtains. Then the storm broke out afresh, lightning cleft the mist-laden air, and the thunder roared in short sharp cracks like the firing of heavy guns. Ever higher wound our road as we climbed the side of the valley, and as a bad dream of the night the storm rolled away behind us. The heights of Ostrog loomed out of the mist far away on

the opposite side of the broad valley, and the sun shone on the white tents and buildings of the monastery, whither I was journeying. We passed a flock of sheep peacefully grazing on our left in a sheltered hollow, watched by a huge white dog. A hurried exclamation by the driver made me jump, and he pulled up the vehicle short, pointing with the whip at a huge eagle swooping down. Breathlessly we watched that fatal swoop, I muttering futile regrets that my gun had been left behind. A howl of pain and the eagle was beating up again with his prey. We could hear the swish of his mighty wings, when suddenly his victim writhed in that grip of iron and *bit* him in the throat. Then we saw the eagle release his hold, and the animal fell heavily to the ground. For once the eagle's eye had failed him, and he had captured a Tartar in the form of the dog, which, evidently badly hurt by the talons and by the fall, lay yelping in his pain. The driver would not stop that I might descend to look at the plucky beast, and we were off again to the running fire of oaths and much whip-cracking with which he urged on his four horses.

"O asses, and offspring of asses, why do ye no work? Dost thou think, O Alat, that thy brethren shall pull and thou do nothing? O asses, accursed beasts, that make my life a burden!" And the whip cracks on the back of any that relaxes the tension for a second on the traces. With a running

fire of such comments, interspersed by ejaculatory efforts at conversation with me and frequent dips into my tobacco-tin, he has beguiled the weary hours since 5 A.M. that morning.

"O asses," I hear him cry again as he leaves me on the newly completed road to Ostrog; for last year it was indeed a pilgrimage undertaken with much groaning and vexation over a typical seesaw Montenegrin track. I overtake a party of red-turbaned Bosnians leading wiry ponies and followed by their women-folk. They have journeyed from Sarajevo, which they left six days ago, and are pausing for a moment by the wayside. One by one they shake hands solemnly with me, answering my "God greet ye!" with the universal formula of "May thy luck be good!" Then an aged Montenegrin accosts me with a hearty inquiry as to the state of my health, and even as I answer him the whitewashed walls of the upper monastery appear far above us through a break in the trees. The old man forgets me on the spot and turns his eyes upwards where lies the body of St Vasili, crying with joy and pious thanks that it has been permitted him to come once more to Ostrog. The road ceases to climb, and I emerge on a long plateau, and by a gate enter the precincts of the lower monastery. Rows and rows of white-covered booths stretch up to the left, where men are busily occupied driving in long stakes and fixing the tent coverings. Girls are washing bottles and cleaning

pans, and every one is bustling with the hurry of preparation; for in two days' time thousands of hungry and thirsty pilgrims will be clamouring for food, eager to break their long fast. At the farther end stand the substantial buildings of the monastery, the episcopal palace, and the tiny church, all opening on to an open space in whose centre grows a great tree.

The venerable Archimandrite receives me with open arms and leads me to my room, which the good bishop has placed at my disposal. Father Peroni is a wonderful little man, and that evening as we sit over our wine he tells me the story again, how exactly forty-nine years ago he formed one of the little band of thirty Montenegrins who, under the leadership of the Grand-Voivoda Mirko, held the upper monastery for ten days against fifteen thousand Turks. Those were stirring times, and my heart beats faster as he tells me how Mirko, the father of the present Prince, called by even the Turks "The Sword of Montenegro," during the siege seized a shell which had penetrated through a window and threw it back, down the precipice, into the midst of the raging Moslems, where it exploded. How the Turks vainly attempted to burn them out by throwing flaming straw upon the roof from the cliffs above, and how the Montenegrins at last came from all sides to their help. Those Turks on the cliffs were hurled down, and their bodies whizzed through the air past the monastery, and were dashed to pieces far below.

As he speaks I can picture the wild scene once more. Attacked from all sides, the Turkish hordes look around them helplessly, wondering from whence come this hail of bullets. But their doubts are soon put to rest as well as their earthly troubles, and through the smoke dashes the gallant *bairaktar* or standard-bearer, followed by a band of reckless warriors, matchlock discarded, heavy *handjar* in hand. Even the fanatical courage of the Mussulman avails nothing against that savage rush, and with the despairing screams of their comrades hurtling through the air from the cliffs above them, they turn to fly. But whither? They are surrounded, and the rich green slopes become a bloody shambles. "How many fell?" I ask. The abbot shakes

his head. "A thousand?" He smiles.

"In one pit alone we put eight hundred, and there were many such. To-day thou canst still find their bones on these heights, and thou needst not seek for long."

With a deprecatory shrug of his shoulders he bids me good-night, and I retire to dream of headless corpses, of a fierce battle with an eagle in mid-air, of falling hundreds of feet, catching a glimpse as I do so of the rock-crowned little monastery, and as I near the earth I fall in the arms of a driver who calls his horses asses. Then comes a great roaring as of mighty waters, and I awake to find the church bells ringing within a few feet of my window, calling the faithful to the early mass.

IV. OSTROG: AT THE SHRINE OF ST VASIL.

St Vasili came from the Hercegovina a century ago. Legend hath it that the spot where now stands the little monastery was shown the saint by a miracle. But all the written records of his life and doings were destroyed by the Turks and his remains nearly captured.

The sun is still behind the rocky wall as I stand with Stefan below amongst the crowded booths and hesitate. Yet it makes such a fair picture in the bright light of the coming sun. The beech-forest between us and the little building above mercifully covers as with a mantle the horrible

sights on the winding path that climbs to the upper monastery,—sights which make the pilgrimage very real and extremely unpleasant. Stefan has no such qualms, and he urges me to start before the way becomes crowded and ere the sun tops the ridge.

We plunge into the wood, and our pilgrimage begins. At intervals of ten yards beggars form a spalier of squalor, disease, and filth. Hideous deformities are paraded to the best advantage, blind men turn up their sightless eyeballs to the leafy roof, mothers hold out poor tortured children, and the dumb rend the heart with

horrible sounds no more resembling the human voice than the grunting of swine. The air is filled with their cries for alms, hands set on arms at impossible angles are stretched forth, and before each is spread a mat with the offerings of the charitable.

"In the name of God and St Vasili, pity me," says a gentle voice, and I look nervously yet compelled by the musical tones. I see the sweet face of a twelve-year-old maiden gazing at me piteously. In wonder that such a fair face should figure in that awful collection of humanity my eyes wander over her form, and then I understand.

Behind me strides a great turbaned Bosnian, handsome and jovial. His hands are full of gifts for the saint.

"Give me, of thy pity, a kreutzer," clamours a beggar.

"Wait, friend, till I return," he answers in hearty tones. "Seest thou not that I am laden to my utmost limit?"

"It is better to give to the helpless and maimed," whines another. "Give me, and I will pray that the holy Vasili shall return thy alms one hundred-fold."

Before us goes a Montenegrin woman who gives her little daughter a small coin to deposit on each of the mats. Half shuddering, yet with curious glances, the child drops the money and hurries after her mother.

We pass a Turk who displays his legs, which end abruptly below the knee. He has bared the stumps to view,

and the doctor's knife—or is it the Montenegrin *handjar*?—has not made a pretty sight. For many decades he has sat there during the pilgrimage, for he lost his feet on these very slopes when the Montenegrins raised the siege in 1863. Now he begs from his former enemies. A little farther lie two Montenegrin veterans, and each is minus a leg lost on Turkish battlefields. Blind men, who are the troubadours of the land, groan forth their dirge-like songs, breaking off suddenly when they hear that the footsteps have passed on, to commence when the next pilgrims approach. Many are swindlers, and these good Stefan shows me that I may not be led to spend my sympathy or my alms on unworthy objects.

"This man can speak as well as thou or I," he says, and facetiously asks a ragged individual who is emitting excruciating noises if he fears not divine retribution? The man darts an angry glance at us and ceases for a moment, only to begin again as he catches sight of new-comers.

"Thou art resting thy back, Jovo," says Stefan to another sturdy wretch with his feet in a sack. "Next week he will be carrying loads in Podgorica," he adds to me.

At last we have passed the last beggar, and before us stands the monastery. We have approached it from the side, and the hill falls away steeply from its base. The monks have utilised the less steep slope, and have built

two or three terraces where vegetables are growing. Then comes a bed of tree-tops, and far below are the tents of the booths. Built into the living rock, and reached by flights of steps, are the primitive abodes of the monks, the walls whitewashed and with large crosses painted roughly on the smoke-blackened rocks. Above the monastery the precipice juts outwards, completely overhanging it, and then rises sheer many hundred feet. It is a unique spectacle, and the rock would seem to be hanging by a thread ready to crush the tiny buildings with the first breath of air.

Pilgrims arrive in a steady stream. Here we see a group of men and women prostrating themselves on the ground and kissing the lowest stone step before they proceed. Close to us a richly dressed woman of Mostar is taking off a pair of modern high-heeled boots and her white stockings, entering the sacred precincts barefooted. So each shows his fervour in his own particular way, and to-day I cannot see a single pilgrim who has not come a journey of many days on foot, fasting the while and with much prayer.

To Father Ristifor we wend our way, up several stone flights of stairs, through a door where we must bend nearly double, and are ushered into the presence of the hermit. For the first moment he has forgotten me, this extraordinary octogenarian, and the next he has impulsively enfolded me in his arms and is kissing me. Then he presses raki upon me, has

ordered coffee, and all the time he pats my arm, my shoulder, or my back in his joy.

"Ah, it is right that honour should be shown thee, my son," he says as I protest; for he has learnt that I am a guest of the bishop, and from Stefan how the *Gospodar* (prince) received me in Cetinje—an invariable open-sesame to loyal Montenegrin hearts. "Thou that hast journeyed from such a far land to us. Ah, but it does my heart good to see thee, an Englishman, and one of the true friends of our country." He is alluding to England's help once given twenty years ago. Other visitors come in, mostly women from the Hercegovina. They kiss his hand thrice and then lay in his lap gifts of clothing, richly embroidered handkerchiefs, or packets of food. In a trice the little room is crowded, and the old man sits and beams on us, not knowing whom next to embrace. Burly men fill the doorway and the narrow passage beyond, while through the tiny open window set in a frame of white can be seen the green mountains and woods—all feeling of distance lost—hanging like a picture on the white-washed wall.

Just below this most perfect of miniature landscapes sits the hermit, his benevolent face smiling out of the snowy-tangled beard and his hair falling like a mantle of fleece on his shoulders. Thus we leave him amongst the group of gaily dressed pilgrims and edge our way towards the shrine.

In a chamber, dimly lit by a little window hewn out of the rock, St Vasili lies in a wooden coffin and covered in his robes. As my eyes grow accustomed to the half-light I see that the walls and arched ceiling are covered with crude paintings. A tall priest with luminous dark eyes and raven locks reaching far below his shoulders receives me. His long flowing black robes and high conical hat lend him a ghostly appearance in the gloom. Crouched in an indistinguishable heap kneels an Albanian woman at the foot of the coffin. Now a woman comes in and kneels before the priest to confess. He covers her head with his *pertrament* (broad stole), and she commences her confession. The priest reads a prayer from a book the while in a loud voice, so that even if we would we cannot hear her sins. As we again emerge we squeeze ourselves against the wall as two Bosnians half carry, half lead, a wretched youth scarce able to walk. Poor wretch! they bump his head violently upon the low lintel of the door, but still he smiles. His faith is great, and what is a little pain like that compared to the tortures of his many days' journey hither, supported on either side on the back of a pony, over paths of stone and rocks?

At the top of the monastery is a spring of water, and thither we ascend, Stefan relating the story of a wicked woman who once journeyed to St Vasili hoping to make all good by a large gift of money which it is customary to place in a plate upon the breast of the saint. The gift—it was paper money—flew to the ground, and again she put it in the plate; but scarcely had she turned to go when it lay once more on the floor, though not a breath of air stirred the quiet of the shrine. Then the attendant priest took the money and gave it back to her, saying that the saint took not the gifts of evil people.

The terrace is full of thirsty men and women, some drinking, others pouring water over their hands. On the parapet we rest our arms and gaze on the view. Above us we cannot see, for the rock juts out beyond; but before us and below is stretched a panorama of peaceful beauty. The thread-like river Zeta in the valley, the lofty ridge opposite, on which nestles the lower monastery, form an incomparable landscape which must have oftentimes filled the soul of St Vasili with that contentment which cometh only to those who are willing to give up the pleasures of the world to the service of God in the midst of His most perfect handiwork.

V. OSTROG: AMONGST THE BOOTHS.

It is evening. The slopes of Ostrog resemble the tented camp of a medieval army as the flickering lamps of oil flash on

silver corslets and bejewelled sword-hilts thrust in gay sashes. I see men in enormous red turbans—long drooping mous-

taches lending a ferocity to their sun-burned faces—jostling other giants in fez or little round cap as they go to and fro in the tents. Wild Turkish music mingles with a monotonous chant, to which a ring of men are solemnly dancing, and on the highest tier of tents a group is watching a pair of dancers who are vying with each other in the agility of their leaps. A hum of humanity ascends to the starlit heaven, punctuated by short, sharp yells and the hails of one who has lost his friend in the press and is calling him by name.

Yet it is the twentieth century, and I am walking with a Viennese doctor, a German clerk, and a Turkish merchant, at Ostrog during the annual pilgrimage. Furthermore, the day is Sunday, at the conclusion of the festival, and the pilgrims are indulging in a few hours' well-earned enjoyment and gaiety. All will have left by the morning except a handful of Montenegrins, and many have journeys of more than a week across the wild mountain passes into the furthestmost parts of Bosnia, the Hercegovina, and Dalmatia. They came fasting and laden with gifts, touching no meat or wine till they had laid their offerings at the tomb of St Vasili and made their confession at his shrine.

On the raised porch of the palace sits the benevolent *Vladika* (bishop) of Montenegro; beside him is a war-worn *Voi-voda*, his costly dress contrasting strangely with the black cassock and purple sash of the

bishop. A group of priests surround their spiritual chief, who not more than half a century ago ruled the land as prince as well as bishop.

A huge ring of Montenegrins with linked arms are majestically dancing the *kolo* before him, singing quaint verses of the *Gospodar* when, twenty-five years earlier, he led them and their fathers to the last big war against the Turks. With one step to the left and three to the right, keeping time to their song, they slowly circle round the open space. Beyond the dancers stands a crowd of on-lookers many deep, steadfastly regarding the bishop on the steps above.

We watch the spectacle too, and converse in our tongues, when I notice a youth at my side who stares at me in open-mouthed wonder. I frown upon him, but not for a second does he relax that intense gaze. Half angered, I speak to him, asking why he stares at me so fixedly. He smiles frankly.

"I watch but thy lips when thou speakest in this strange tongue," he says. "I have never heard another tongue but mine own."

We edge our way outwards and go to the tent of Stefan for a glass of his excellent wine. He sees us coming, and unceremoniously bundles half a dozen guests from their seats on a long plank placed on upturned boxes.

"Seest thou not who comes?" we hear him say to one old man who is slow to move. Many are the war medals on

his breast, and in his hand he holds a long *tchibouque*.

"Nay," say I, seating myself at his side; "we are the strangers here, and I would talk to this old *junak*."

"As strangers must ye also be honoured," answers the "hero"; but his face lights up at my words. In his sash he carried a magnificent *hand-jar* worth ten times the cost of his ragged clothing, and with a mute request I draw it from him.

"It has bitten the necks of many of thy countrymen," he says to Buto, the Turk, our friend, and we all laugh, for no ill-will is borne to-day.

Three kids are bleating piteously as a burly Montenegrin feels their ribs callously. He releases one from the tree to which they are bound in the circle of light before the tent, and another gives him an evil-looking knife. Shouldering the kid, he walks away. Before we leave he brings a skinned carcass back, and our host tempts us with the kidneys, which he will roast on the fire over there in the corner. Skillfully others spit the still warm body on a long stake, and bearing it off they place it over the fire, where a boy thoughtfully acts as turnspit. Many are the lambs and kids slaughtered and thus roasted whole to-day, and the cries of the victims mingle with the talk and laughter of the feasters.

We pay and go, passing another tent close by, which is oddly empty compared to the others. Its owner looks worried,

for to him come few guests. There are not many who care to sit at the table of the traitor Juro. Since he sold his own brother for three hundred gulden, delivering him into the pitiless hand of the vendetta, all luck and prosperity have left him—ay, and his life is in danger from his own relations.

The Turkish music attracts us, and thither we wend our way. The booth is the most crowded of all, but again place is made for us on the instant. All is laughter and good-humour in that bright coloured assembly. The stormy music is at times wellnigh inaudible.

"Fear not," I say, laughing, to a sweetly fair maiden beside whom chance has seated me. She sits blushing and with downcast eyes, for by rights she should stand when men sit, and I and my clothes are still more strange. Others hear me, and a storm of merry chaff arises which still more embarrasses the shy girl. She looks like some fawn startled in a woodland glade, and the roses on her cheeks deepen.

"My sister is not wed," calls a tall young fellow with a meaning laugh.

"Alas! she does not love me," I answer in the same spirit, as the serving-man brings huge bottles of wine.

Time flies apace amidst this gay scene, and when the Turks rest from their music, the Montenegrins sing. Not for a moment does the merriment pause till I hear the first word spoken in anger that day. Stefan, my servant, has found his seat ap-

propriated by a man wearing the insignia of an officer of militia, during the few minutes he has gone to attend to the horses.

It comes like a flash. The intruder, a swarthy, ill-tempered man, shouts an insult, refusing to move. There is a lull in the noise, and Buto, the Turk, speaks him fairly.

"Thou liar and cheat," comes the answer, and Buto leaps like an arrow from the bow from his seat on to the table towards the man, who has at last jumped up and has drawn his revolver. But Buto never reaches him. In a second the intruder has been seized and is thrown down the steps to the path below. I follow, for I fear a shot fired at random into the crowded booth; but I find the man pinioned, his revolver in the hands of a stern-looking man, in whom I recognise one of the secret police. Seeing me, he salutes.

"I ask thy pardon," he says; "this man will be severely punished, and it will be many months ere he can again lay his hand on revolver where strangers are present."

We will beg him off in the

morning, for already the heat of wine is leaving him, and he looks at us appealingly.

The incident is forgotten at once, and all is merriment again, only when the Turks who are from Bosnia strike up an Austrian military march, a Montenegrin rises and tells the leader to play some other tune, "else," he adds, "we will bind thee to the tent pole."

"I must go," says the doctor; "at noon I must be in Podgorica, and it is seven hours' ride."

We look at him in astonishment, and he as an answer nods towards the heavens. The stars are paling fast, and over the hills steals a faint glow of crimson. In the coming light men are saddling horses and hurrying to and fro. A string of pilgrims are already leaving the monastery gates. Ere the sun has topped the mountains, peace and solitude will reign o'er the heights of Ostrog once more. From the many paths leading into the valley comes the crackle of pistol-shots. It is the farewell of the Montenegrins.

REGINALD WYON.

PILOTING PRINCES.

BY HUGH CLIFFORD, C.M.G.

To act the part of officer in attendance upon Malayan royalties is a task with which circumstances have familiarised me. As I review the past it seems to me that I have been engaged in that thankless office on and off any time these last nineteen years; and my memory calls up a series of recollections, commonplace enough in themselves, but alien to the experience of the majority of my fellows, and as such perhaps worth recording.

I was first detailed for duty of this description when I was myself in leading-strings—that is to say, at a time when I was a newly joined cadet, and barely more than half-way through my teens. I knew very little of natives in those days, and even less of the vernacular; but I was chosen for the post, for which I was manifestly ill-fitted, by no less a person than the very *raja* over whose welfare I was required to watch. The reasons that actuated his choice were not far to seek: he had no desire to be controlled by any one, and he rightly judged that I should be absolutely powerless to control him. He was a typical son of the old *régime*, a barbarous person of unspeakable manners and morals. When, some years later, his time came to die, and when, in accordance with the custom of the land, his people conferred a posthumous

title upon him, they called him “Al-Mérhum Rahmat Allah,” which, being interpreted, is, “The late king, *God be merciful to him!*” They felt that no conventional phrase of laudation or glorification would fit him, and that, in view of his manifold iniquities, the best that his most sanguine friends could hope was that Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate, might grant him the forgiveness which he had not earned, but needed sorely.

In the company of this potentate I spent three lurid weeks while he disported himself in the neighbouring colony of Penang. I was technically responsible for all his lapses from prudence and mannerliness, yet I knew myself for what I was—the merest fly upon the wheel! His doings and omissions covered me with shame as with a garment. When we appeared in public I was conscious, with the acuteness of agony only known to the very young, that we presented a grotesque and ridiculous figure. When some more than usually humiliating incident occurred, it was in vain that I pleaded my impotence to prevent or guide him. It was my business to do both, and the excuse of sheer impossibility was rejected with scorn whenever I urged it. That time comes back to me now with all the haunting misery

of a bad dream. Most of the tales which I might tell concerning it are of the kind that must be told *in camera*, and cannot therefore be printed here; but one or two of a more publishable character will suffice to indicate the many and grievous things which I suffered at his hands.

One of my chief troubles lay in the inability of my king to appreciate the advantages of punctuality. In common with all Malays he held time to be valueless, and regarded an hour or two either way as a thing of no account. I remember my distress when all my efforts failed to drag him from his sleeping-mat in due time for a parade of a European regiment which, to the extreme discontent of a peppery old commanding officer, had been ordered in his honour. British troops in Asia are very precious things, and *the* unpardonable sin is to keep them standing in the sun-glare. When, therefore, I at last sneaked on to the ground in the wake of my king, I longed, if ever man did, that the earth would gape and swallow me. The *rāja* was a fine billow of a man, and he waddled with the rolling gait of a sailor. His figure was portly, and he had a strong predilection for gorgeous colours and barbaric raiment. On that particular morning he was chastely clad in a bright yellow cap with a black scroll from the Kurân embroidered upon it, in a pink cloth coat, a pair of green silk Chinese trousers reaching to the middle of his shins, and

in a number of red, blue, and purple shawls huddled about his waist. Lengths of brown hairy legs protruded from the bottoms of his trousers, and his bare splay feet were thrust into canvas tennis-shoes without strings. He leaned heavily on a long patriarchal staff, and scowled furiously at all the world, as was his wont. I noted miserably the effect which this apparition was having upon the parade collectively, and my discomfiture was completed by the impressive things which the commanding officer said to me in a voice of concentrated fury as he rode up to us with his face "set like the day of judgment." Of course I was not to blame, and equally of course the whole blame was laid at my door; nor did the consciousness of injury and innocence solace me greatly.

On another never-to-be-forgotten occasion I escorted the king to the waterfall at Penang, which is one of the sights of that little stew-pan of a place. The fall tumbles down the face of a hill out of the heart of a great bank of greenery, into the concrete reservoir whence the good people of Penang draw their drinking-water, and this spot is reached from the road below by a stiff climb up a steep and winding footpath. I have said that my king was of a full habit of body, wherefore he arrived at the top of the ascent hot, dusty, perspiring, and in a more villainous temper than was usual even with him. He sat himself down heavily by the roadside, puffing

and blowing, mopping his face with a cloth, and cursing his panic-stricken followers, who fanned and shampooed him assiduously. Then, having somewhat recovered his breath, he suddenly announced his unshakable resolve to cool his burning body by bathing in the reservoir. Now the criminality of this act cannot easily be exaggerated, and an alert municipality keeps a little Tamil policeman always on the spot for the sole purpose of prosecuting the delinquents who sin against public decency by attempting to swim in the drinking-water of its citizens. These things I explained to my king, and the little Tamil aforesaid, torn in twain by his respect for royalty and his dread of his employers, added his tears to my persuasions. The king, however, was a man of strong character, not easily to be moved from any purpose upon which his will was set. For all the effect that our words and entreaties had upon him, the Tamil and I might as well have addressed ourselves to a stone wall. Sitting on a culvert by the roadside, without even looking at us or vouchsafing us a reply more articulate than a grunt, he continued to divest himself of his garments, piece by piece, after the manner of the circus-rider so dear to a provincial audience. To put the crowning horror on the situation, a European picnic-party arrived at the foot of the hill and began to make the ascent just as the king was getting down, so to speak, to the bed-rock; and with

writhings of agony I presently recognised the voices of several ladies with whom I had every desire to stand well. Forming a kind of guard of dishonour, my companions and I grouped ourselves about the king, trying to screen from sight as much of his ample person as possible; but our efforts were in vain, for just as the new arrivals came up to us my monarch lurched on to his feet, and pushed his way through our ranks. He glared murderously at my friends, who eyed the ill-favoured old brown man in his airy costume with extreme disapproval. Then he waddled forward, shouldered his way between two ladies, and crawled down the bank of the reservoir, whence, with only his nose, eyes, and mouth above the level of the water, he looked up at us with all the malevolence of a bull buffalo. I tried, not very successfully I fear, to look as though I had no earthly connection with this shameless violator of the law; but I came in for an unmerciful amount of chaff from the men of the party, while the ladies, I think, decided then and there that I was a lover of low company, a disreputable person with whom it was safest to have only the very barest acquaintance. In addition to this I had to eat as much dirt, to make as many apologies, and to accept as much reproof, as though I had myself defiled the drinking-water of the community.

In the years that followed it frequently fell to my lot to attend this same *rāja* during his

visits to the colony ; but by that time I had acquired a sound working knowledge of the vernacular, and had learned enough of the intricacies of the Malayan character to be able to deal with some degree of confidence and success with even this abnormal development of the race. Moreover, I had made the discovery that avarice was the keynote of my king's character ; and by playing upon this weakness skilfully, and, I fear, unscrupulously, I was able to induce him to do and leave undone according as I conceived it to be desirable. I had a weapon in my hand now which would easily have deterred His Highness from swimming in the Penang reservoir, for it would have been easy to frighten him with the bogey of phantom damages, and therefore my task was greatly lightened. The king meanwhile had also learned something of my own prejudices and predilections, and whenever we chanced to have a difference of opinion he promptly retaliated by publicly humiliating me. Thus, when invited to five-o'clock tea by some lady of high standing in the community, he would take complete charge of the tea-table, shouting to his ragamuffin followers to join in the plunder, and distributing all the available comestibles among them before I could intervene. All this he would do with a wicked eye cocked in my direction to note how I bore up under the ordeal ; or else with the same iniquitous leer he would osten-

tatiously remove the soaking quid of tobacco, red with betel-juice, from between his lip and gums, and would cast it upon the carpet in our midst with a soft, splashy *flop* that made the stoutest shudder. Also he would buy useless things in the most reckless fashion, and would shamelessly repudiate the purchases when the time arrived for payment. On such occasions he would storm and rave and whine, would call Allah and His Prophet to witness that he had never intended to buy anything, and would ask pathetically whether, in the name of common-sense, it was possible to conceive him riding a high bicycle, working a sewing-machine, or playing on the double-bass. Why, in the first instance, he ever pretended to deal in such things is difficult to understand ; but I fancy that the explanation lay in the fact that the temporary possession of articles for which no payment had been made gave him an added sense of wealth, and that this was the last emotion that the thieving years had left him. It was often weary work enough trying to keep him out of the reach of the civil and criminal law ; but in the end I used to get him back to his own country — everlastingly disgraced, it is true, but more or less unharmed. Yet it is curious how understanding and sympathy bind a man to even the least attractive personality, for I grew to have more than a sneaking affection for

my wicked old king. I learned from him much concerning the management of his people which has since stood me in good stead; I was often forced to admire the hard-bit, strong-willed, shameless, but fearless old curmudgeon; and when at length he died in the odour of iniquity, I joined heartily, and more than a little sadly, in his people's prayer, "God be merciful to him!"

Memories recur to me of many another Malayan *rāja* to whom from time to time I have acted as pilot through the reefs and shallows which, for a native, beset the difficult waters of European life. The duty has frequently been interesting, and on the whole pleasant; for I have been fortunate in the men with whom circumstances have placed me in this relationship, and never again have I been called upon to attend a chief whose character even remotely resembled that of the late lamented "God be merciful to him." The *rāja* to whom I have most frequently acted the part of guide, philosopher, and friend is, to my thinking, one of the most picturesque figures in Asia. In his youth he was a mighty warrior; he is still a keen sportsman; and during the best years of his life he has been a stern and ruthless ruler of men. After a decade of devastating warfare, two-thirds of which period were packed with defeats, disasters, and misfortunes that must have broken the spirit of a weaker man than he, the throne upon which he after-

wards sat so squarely was wrested by him from his kinsman, the rightful owner of the kingship which he coveted. Thereafter for more than a quarter of a century he ruled a turbulent people in such wise that no man in all that lawless State dared think above a whisper without his leave. He so impressed his will upon his subjects that for them his lightest word, his merest whim, his hinted desire, were law; and though, since his were the limitations of the brown man, he governed selfishly, using his "high place as perch for low ambition and a vantage-ground for pleasure," his was a personality, a force, that kindled the imagination and claimed the tribute of a reluctant admiration. During two blood-curdling years I lived in his country under his rule, watching his methods with a fascination of horror, and with the agony that comes to one who is the impotent witness of much evil; yet, when at last Great Britain was prodged out of its impassivity and patience, and was forced to take upon itself the tranquilisation of the troubled land, it was with a curious blending of intense relief and profound sympathy for the man himself that I saw the downfall of his power. It was an instinctive consciousness that I cherished the latter sentiment that led him, perhaps, to admit me to his intimate friendship; for, as I have said, sympathy and understanding are the only keys wherewith

to unlock the brown man's heart, and if they be lacking familiar intercourse between Asiatic and European are for ever vain. These things need not presuppose any measure of approval of the man himself, or of the questionable methods for which he stands. They only imply sufficient of imagination to enable the European to occupy in spirit the position which is natural to the Asiatic, to adopt for the nonce his impossible point of view, to follow the tortuous twistings of his mind as it works crookedly, but as he deems logically, through obscure byways from right to left.

"The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-point goes :
The butterfly upon the road
Preaches contentment to the toad."

That typifies the usual relations of the white man and the brown; but when once the butterfly has learned to feel vicariously the prick of the harrow—even though, firm in the conviction that the barren lands must be tilled, he has no desire to stay it—he has come very near to the toad, and can do with him what he will. This is the first, the fundamental, lesson that the Anglo-Asiatic must take to heart, for understanding and sympathy are the only bases upon which the rule of the alien in the East can stand and endure.

The reputation of my king had preceded him when first I led him forth into the haunts of white men; and it was ever a

keen delight to me to note the impression which he created upon those with whom he came in contact. There was no need to state that this was a man and a ruler of men. His dignified bearing, his handsome clean-cut features, the stern lines in which on occasion his face could set, his keen, hard eyes, all made the fact abundantly clear; yet his calm and courtly manners, the soft tones of his voice, his air of languor and grace, and his quiet, almost melancholy, gentleness were utterly out of keeping with our knowledge of his record. Even I was tempted at times to believe that he must have been maligned, while the European public was frankly incredulous; for in truth he was "the mildest mannered man that ever scuttled ship or cut a throat," he who in his time had caused throats to be cut without number! Though to be ruled by him was an experience that no man would willingly undergo, to be in attendance upon him was at once a pleasure and a privilege; and I used to return with him to his own country glowing with the golden opinions which he had earned from great and small, and shining with something of the glory reflected from him.

Quite recently Fate, which has a taste for incongruities, so ordered it that I, who have spent the best days of my life among wild men and in savage places, should be suddenly transferred from the outskirts, and should be thrust into the heart of things, in London itself,

during the weeks that were to have seen the Coronation of King Edward VII. The impression which the great unwieldy town made even upon the Londoner born, while it merited the description happily applied to it of being "all board and no lodging," was curious enough; for, decked fantastically with a profusion of frivolous trappings, and crammed to the brim with gaping sight-seers, it presented an appearance very foreign to its usual sombre habit. With that, however, I am at the moment in no way concerned; for it was my privilege to look upon it through the eyes of others—the eyes of some of those brown folk in whose deep, silent forests I have lived so long. Thus all that was most old and most familiar was suddenly revealed to me in a new light, focussed from a strange standpoint.

After an adventurous and athletic night passed in a water-side hotel, where the room that I had engaged for my exclusive use was tenanted awfully by numerous uninvited guests, I met my Malay friends on the deck of the great ship which had borne them from their fatherland to the heart of the Empire. With the exception of their chief, Sultan Idris, G.C.M.G., bin Iskandar of Pérak, no man among them had ever visited England, and the bustle and the roar, and I fear the ugliness, of the docks cowed them somewhat.

"We be like unto stags which have strayed from the forest into a king's city!" said

one of them, looking through awe-stricken eyes at the mean dock buildings, and the swarms of hurrying men, scuttling to and fro like ants whose heap has been disturbed. "And this, then, is the town of London! *Allah! Allah! Allah!*"

I told him that it was only an outlying flange of the big town, and that he would see the real thing presently. He looked at me with the melancholy gaze of his people, shaking his head sadly, and it was plain that a great fear and bewilderment oppressed him. And indeed the contrast which the docks presented to the land in which all his days had been passed was a cruel one. There, for all that men have scratched the earth a little for clearing or village, have scored it with roads and railways, have burrowed into its surface in search of mineral wealth, the land still sleeps its long unbroken sleep, swathed to the chin in its green coverlet of vegetation. There a man may very easily turn his back upon the things of mankind, and find himself utterly alone with nature in her inviolate sanctuaries, with nothing to break upon the eternal stillness save the patter of a brook upon its pebbles, the hum of unseen bees in distant tree-tops, and the insistent drowsy murmur of the forest life. There, in very truth, is the abode of that peace which passeth all understanding; there the din of life is hushed wonderfully; and in place of glaring advertisements and sprawling ell-long letters, the picture-writing of the jungle is scored

faintly on bark and branch and yielding leaf-strewn soil—the picture-writing that none save the forest-lover has the wit to read. Straight from a lifetime spent in this dimly-lighted No-man's land, where slumberous airs breathe softly and deep rest abides, my Malay friends, after many days passed in the belly of a ship, with God's vast sea spread around them and His sky arched above their heads, found themselves suddenly in a world black with grime, ringing with a perpetual clamour, in which men bowed by heavy burdens, dingy as the heavens lowering over them, hustled and strove. What wonder then if, mistaking it for a land of devils, they looked around fearfully, with the forest-creature's instinct, seeking for a thicket into which to plunge and hide!

On our way up to London something like a panic seized some of them, though the Sultan laughed pitilessly at their fears.

"Behold, Túan," said one of them, pointing to the maze of railway lines past which we were scurrying, "yonder be four-and-twenty iron-roadways. Now, how should any man select unerringly the track which is his own, seeing that all are so much alike? Yet, if he lose his way, it is certain that our train will collide with these countless ones which are for ever hurrying past us, and if that befall . . . !" An expressive gesture indicated our utter annihilation.

London itself froze their speech at the source. They

could only shake their heads and ejaculate the names of Allah and His Prophet. As they gradually grew more accustomed to the wonderful sight of the crowded footways and the dense throng of traffic, they began to assort their impressions and to comment upon the things which chiefly appealed to them. What struck them most forcibly was the amenity to discipline which the multitudes displayed, and the way in which every individual seemed to assist rather than to obstruct the authorities. This was altogether foreign to their previous experience, for the average Asiatic, if left to his own devices, is as inconsequently tiresome and uncontrollable as a Derby dog. Looking out across the Epsom downs from the Members' Stand, they marvelled at the greatness of the multitude there congregated, for, as one of them said, until that day he had not thought that in all the world there existed so many human beings. "But," he added, "how can horse-racing be possible in such a throng? There is no course!"

"Wait a little," I replied, "and presently you will see."

As I spoke the police began to extend themselves from rail to rail, pushing their way between the mob of men and women quietly, methodically, unostentatiously, with a complete absence of excitement or hurry. Soon the thin line of helmets showed in an unbroken row from side to side of the course, and as it began to move forward the people fell

back quickly of their own accord, until in an incredibly short space of time the course was empty save for the small boys gathering up scraps of paper with feverish haste.

The Malays gazed in fascination. "They drive men as we drive fish with the *rèlap-cord*!" cried one of them.

"But how is this wonderful thing accomplished?" asked a second. "The police use no blows or kicks, they do not even employ pungent words, yet no man resists them! All the people do as they are bidden, raising no protest. Verily this thing is a miracle!"

It is true that the advantages of organised order and of co-operation with the authorities for the common good and convenience are things which Asiatics have still to learn, yet their practical results certainly awoke a tremendous enthusiasm in my friends; and nothing which England had to show them inspired in them a greater measure of admiration and delight.

Yet in the beginning of their stay our country treated them in a churlish fashion, for the blighting rigours of our English June nipped them to the bone. Cowering over the fire in rooms the windows of which were kept closely shut, they declared, through chattering teeth, that cold weather was a propitious omen in times of great State functions, giving as their reason that while coolness and all that is refreshing has its origin in Heaven, heat derives its glow from the fires of the Terrible Place,—wherefore it was plain

that Heaven was blessing the inauguration of the King's reign.

On the night of their arrival I went through the suite of rooms which had been placed at our disposal, for the purpose of seeing that all was well with my friends; and it was fortunate that I did so, for I found two of the chiefs sleeping on the *outside* of their beds, with only a silk coverlet, such as is used in their own country, pulled up about their necks. They were shivering miserably, and I roused them, and inquired what they were doing. They replied in a most woe-begone fashion that they were trying to get to sleep, and that they considered the circumstances somewhat adverse. They had a courteous reluctance to say anything deprecatory concerning the climate of my native land, but it was plain that it met with their unqualified disapproval. I suggested to them the advisability of getting into their beds, and they gazed at me wonderingly.

"Have they any insides?" they asked. In their own country a sleeping-mat is a sleeping-mat, and bed-clothes do not exist, wherefore a bed had never been presented to their imaginations as anything save a mat upon which to lie.

I pulled open their beds, popped them in, tucked them up, turned out the light, and bade them tell me how they liked the unusual experience.

Next morning they were loud in their praise of the new discovery and of European ingenuity.

"How great," they exclaimed, "is the intelligence of the white folk! Those sleeping-mats, which have insides to them, are indeed a splendid invention!"

The dead weight of bed-clothes, however, sorely oppressed limbs that had never before been fettered by such encumbrances, and my friends rose from their beds with aching legs, and bodies tired ere ever the day was begun. When, therefore, the long-delayed heat at last arrived, they hailed it with an added delight, because it enabled them once again to sleep as men should sleep—on the *outsides* of their "mats."

To the majority of my Malays the new experience, this sudden transportation into worlds undreamed of, was a keen delight. They complained of the shortness of their visit, since, they said, their hearts were not yet satisfied. "We have seen much," they declared, "wonderful things which, when we tell them of it, our folk at home will by no means believe; but there is so much more that we have not seen or known. We have only touched the fringe: we have had no time in which to examine the texture of the fabric. A lifetime spent in study of the white man's country would not suffice, for here all things are strange and very marvellous."

"Now at last I understand," said one of the chiefs to me, "why time is valued so highly by white people. In this country each day is so packed with living that if a man misses so much as a quarter of an hour, never again will he catch up the minutes which have escaped him. With

us life saunters; here it gallops as though it were pursued by devils!"

"I bear back with me to mine own country," said another, "things to ponder upon sufficient to last me all my days. Here I pass every moment in seeing and listening. I have no space in which to think or to arrange my impressions. When we meet again yonder, in the Malayan land, perchance I shall have had leisure in which to meditate upon all that I have observed. Then, Tûan, I shall be able to tell thee something concerning that which I have felt. Now I can say nothing, for mine eyes reel and are giddy with much seeing of marvels. Yet," he added thoughtfully, "when once again I am back in the quiet forest-places, where together we have wandered, all this will appear to me as a distant dream, and though my memory will hold the pictures of it, I shall have much ado to persuade myself that they are not fantasies which have cheated me."

One old chief, who had been uprooted sorely against his will, and had been brought to Europe by the Sultan that his narrow mind might be enlarged, detested the whole experience quite frankly and unreservedly. He had never before been separated for more than a day or two from his womenkind, and he pined miserably for the society of his ladies. He also abhorred our climate, and for this, it must be confessed, he had sound reason on his side. In addition he felt himself to be utterly out of tune with his surround-

ings. The roar and the rush of London irked him; the absence of greenery and of sunlight was at once unnatural and unutterably depressing; he could see nothing to admire, and a great deal to dislike, in a world where all things apparently were made by Boards of Works and not by the Creator, and where life was a sort of mechanical contrivance, an affair of wheels and cogs and chains.

"Even the ground here is made of wood," he said, "and the sky is the smoke of innumerable cooking-fires. How many days yet remain, Tûan, before we may set out again for our own country?"

"There be three things, Tûan," he said on another occasion, "which, according to the ancient saying, are the best joys of life: to wed a virgin, to win a battle, and to return home after much voyaging; and surely the return home is the greatest of these. How many days still remain to be counted, Tûan?"

One evening while I was dressing for dinner, I strolled, as was my wont, into the room he occupied next to my own, and found him walking up and down like a beast in a cage. He was swaddled to the chin in an ulster, and his bare feet were *flap-flapping* on the carpet.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I am walking from Kuâla Kangsar to Bûkit Gantang," he replied, naming two villages in his native country which lie at a distance of some twenty miles from one another; and he

continued to tramp to and fro with set face and determined gait.

Presently he spoke again. "I have reached Kuâla Dal," he said. A few minutes later, "I am passing through the village of Padang Rêngas. See, yonder is Bûkit Pôndok, the limestone bluff!" And presently, drawing in his breath quickly and pantingly, "I am breasting the slopes of Gâpis!" he said.

He was quite grave and serious, was "making believe" as successfully as any child might have done, and I doubt not that he was deriving much comfort from the illusion into which he was cheating himself—the illusion that he was once again trudging through the familiar country—side from which the adverse circumstances that banished him could never wean his love. To me his was a pathetic figure as, grotesquely clad, he paced in blighting weather the floor of a London hotel, and strove to transport himself in spirit back to the glad sunshine, the crowding vegetation, the sweet soft scents, and the indolent peace of his native land. Well, the period of his sufferings is ended; and now, perhaps, in pious pilgrimage for his safe return, he is strolling through Padang Rêngas and up the slopes of Gâpis—loving every inch of the land as he never loved it before—in company with the dainty ladies, divorced from whose society it was impossible for him to find contentment.

The Sultan of Pérak had

paid a long visit to England some eighteen years earlier, and London wrought upon him, therefore, no new impression. A man of fifty-three years of age, he has passed almost exactly half his life under Malay rule, and half under the new *régime* inaugurated by Great Britain. A man with eyes wherewith to see, and a mind wherewith to judge, compare, and think, he is probably among the most enlightened rulers of the Native States of the East, and a convinced apostle of British rule. He has seen in his own time his country pass from a mere wilderness of forest, threaded sparsely by sorry footpaths, into a land surprisingly wealthy and prosperous, over the face of which roads and railways run criss-cross like the meshes of a net. He has seen lawlessness, brigandage, rapine, and constant internecine strife vanish and be replaced by a peacefulness unequalled in Piccadilly. He has seen the spear and the *kris*, which once ruled his world, laid aside in the glass cases of museums, or brought out only on state occasions to deck courtly ceremonials. Moreover, he has seen his own ancestral lands, which of old lay fallow under dense jungle, opened up and made to produce rich revenues; blackest ignorance replaced by education, lack of sanitation by a wise respect for the laws of hygiene, and dire poverty by wealth and comfort. Though the sentimentalist may mourn the disappearance of much that was

picturesque, of much that was attractive, yet these be wonderful changes for any man to have witnessed, still more to have had a big hand in bringing to pass; and without disparaging the wisdom and self-devotion of his European advisers, it must be admitted that Pêrak owes a large share of its prosperity to the personal efforts of its present Sultan.

But perhaps the thing which chiefly fires the Sultan's imagination is no one of the revolutions in facts and in ideas to which I have alluded, for in all his talks with me it was not upon any of them that he insisted. The cardinal point which he gripped, and which obviously filled him with pride, was the contrast between his own position in the world and that of the seven-and-twenty members of his House who in unbroken line have ruled over his country. They, he would say, were frogs beneath an inverted cocoanut-shell who dreamed not that there was any world beyond the narrow limits in which they were pent. Shut off from the rest of mankind, living in the hearts of their vast forests, they ruled barbarously over a barbarous people. They were feared by their subjects above the tiger, and with ample reason they were loved less than he; they wrought much evil, and no good to man or beast; and withal they were squalid folk, contented with a paltry state, living ignobly in a world that did not know the bare fact of their existence.

"It is a wonderful thing," he said to me as we drove off the Horse-Guards' parade after the great Colonial Review. "These be but samples of the King's soldiers in distant lands. I saw our own people,—a mere dozen or so,—yet I know for how many that dozen stands. Mine is but a tiny country, while others that have sent men here to-day are vast. What a tremendous host do those whom we have seen this morning represent! Never since Allah first made the world hath there been so mighty a gathering! And this host is the host of *my* King! It is a splendid thing to think that one belongs to such an Empire—that one is part of it! None of my forebears, stowed away in their forests, enjoyed the greatness that is mine, in that I am myself a portion of something so very great!"

That speech came from his heart, was no mere oriental hyperbole, for he spoke to me as friend to friend, and was not sparing of his criticisms when occasion arose. Once he chanced to hear Mr Lundon storming and ranting from the Irish benches in the House of Commons, and though he could not understand that distinguished patriot's eloquence, the exhibition shocked, pained, and grieved him.

"It is not at all seemly," he said, "that, when in the Council of the King assembled, men should speak so unmannerly, and with a voice so loud and arrogant. Such things should not be suffered." And I, for

one, found myself in hearty agreement with his opinion.

When his nephew related to him the plot of Mr Stephen Phillips' "*Paolo and Francesca*," a performance of which he had witnessed, the Sultan shook his head.

"That is an evil tale of a very degrading character," he said. "It is not fitting that such a story should be told, far less acted, more especially in the presence of ladies!" And when he was informed that the incident was historically accurate, that only served to increase the gravity of his disapproval. "That such a thing should have happened is very shameful," he said, "and surely it were better to suffer it to be forgotten. Why revive these ancient scandals? And why should our pity be asked for folk so utterly depraved?"

Europeans are apt to regard Malays as less nice in the choice of subject of conversation than ourselves, and deduce from this a coarseness of mind which does not exist. My own experience is that they speak frankly of certain matters which are taboo among ourselves, not from prurience, but from simplicity and a complete absence of false shame. They approach the mysteries of life from a different and, as I think, from a more reverential standpoint, conceiving that all things which God has ordained must be accepted as natural facts in the scheme which He has created. When, however, they light upon something which is clearly not of God's ordinance, they are shocked and outraged to a

degree which is certainly unknown to the modern playgoer in civilised Europe.

Observing all things with keen intelligence, criticising all that struck him as unworthy, praising everything that appealed to him as rightly belonging to the great Empire of which he felt himself to be a member, pleased by the kindness and courtesy extended to him, and looking forward with intense interest to the tremendous ceremony which he had come so far to witness, the Sultan of Pêrak passed the days of his visit until that fateful Tuesday arrived. We had been driving that morning, and the first news of the calamity which had befallen reached us through the posters of the evening newspapers. The blow was to us all a heavy one, but from the Sultan there came no word concerning his personal disappointment.

"It is the will of Allah," he said simply. "Even our King is His servant to do with what He will; and I, who am the

servant of the King, can do little to aid him in his extremity. But that little I will do. To-day and to-morrow—until the danger to the King be passed—I go not forth from my dwelling. I will *sẽmbahiang hajat*—recite prayers for the King—to him my service is due, for to him I owe—everything!"

And there I will leave him, clad simply in cotton garments, kneeling and prostrating himself upon his prayer-carpet, making earnest supplication to the King of kings for the life of the Ruler whose servants, in his name, have brought a Malayan people out of the Land of Darkness and out of the House of Bondage. Surely there is hope for a race, let the pessimists say what they will, whose influence wins the love, admiration, confidence, and ready support of such men as this—men with the clean mind, the keen intelligence, and the kind heart of the Sultan of Pêrak—and makes of them loyal and enthusiastic Imperialists.

POEMS BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

SILVIA.

SILVIA, dost thou still
That time remember of thy days on earth,
When beauty in thine eyes, that flash'd at will
Smiles of a roguish mirth,
Shone radiant, and the girl,
Joyous at whiles, at whiles of pensive mood,
Was blossoming into lovelier womanhood.

From out thy quiet room,
The neighbouring street along,
Thy voice was heard, still breaking into song,
When thou, upon thy woman's work intent,
Didst sit, the long day through,
Thy thoughts serenely bent
On what the days to come for thee might do.
'Twas May, with all its fragrance and its flowers,
And so thine hours flow'd onward—happy hours.

Throwing my studies for a while aside,
My books, and all the lore,
That 'twas my joy and pride
From my first youth to ponder o'er and o'er,
I hurried from my room,
And from a casement high
Of my paternal home, at sound
Of that dear voice, would strain
My ears to catch
Its every tone, and watch
The nimble hand that plied
The shuttle of the overwearied loom.
Above me was the sky, a cloudless blue,
Then caught my eye
The gardens down below, the lanes ablaze
With golden leafage, then the distant sea,

And after that the mountain towering nigh.
Not tongue of man can say,
What rapturous feelings then my breast did sway.

Oh, what sweet thoughts, what hopes, my Silvia,
Were ours, what songs with ecstasy elate!
And what to our glad eyes
Seem'd human life, and fate!
When I remember all
That promised then so fair,
I sink disconsolate,
My thoughts are turned to gall,
And lamentation of my hapless state.
O Nature! Nature! Why,
Why not fulfil for us
What thou didst promise then? Oh why
Befool thy children thus?

Ere winter chill had yet embrown'd the land,
By strange disease attack'd and overcome,
Thou, darling, wert cut off. Thou didst not see
Thy budding years to perfect flower expand,
Nor ever throbb'd thy heart, to hear the praise
Of thy dark hair, or see love-lighted eyes
Bent upon thine with fond admiring gaze,
Nor ever did thy mates discourse to thee
Of love on festal days.

So, too, for me
Sweet hope was slain. So also to my years
The Fates denied a Springtime. How, ah how,
Hast thou pass'd utterly away from me,
Thou dear companion of my manhood's dawn,
My hope, for ever to be mourn'd with tears!
Is this the world our fancy drew? Are these
The joys, the love, the deeds, the scenes to be,
Whereof so oft in happy hours we spoke?
Is this of all of mortal kind the doom?
When first the woful truth upon us broke,
Thou, hapless one, wast stricken to the heart,
And unto thee from far with beckoning hand
It show'd chill death, and a dark empty tomb.



TO THE MOON.

O GRACIOUS Lady-Moon! I mind me how,
A year ago, up to this knoll I came,
With anguish in my heart, to gaze on thee.
And thou didst then o'er yonder woodland hang,
Turning its gloom to light, as thou dost now;
And blurred and clouded then thy face appeared,
Seen through the tears that crowded to mine eyes,
For full of travail was my life and drear,
As still it is, and will be to the close.
Oh, my belovèd Moon! And yet I joy
In calling up and living o'er again
The sorrows of that time. How sweet it is,
When we are young, and hope is long, and brief
The course that can by memory be retraced,
Remembering things that were in days gone by,
Though they be sad, and though their pains endure.

THE INFINITE.

THIS lonely knoll was ever dear to me,
This hedgerow, too, that hides from view so large
A portion of the far horizon's verge.
But, as I sit and gaze, thoughts rise in me
Of spaces limitless that lie beyond,
Of superhuman silences, and depths
Of quietude profound; so by degrees
Awe troubles not my heart. And as I hear
The wind that rustles through the brake hard by,
That fitful sound with these vast silences
I set me to compare, and so recall
Eternity, and the roll of ages dead,
And the live present, with its mad turmoil.
Thus thought is founder'd in immensity,
And shipwreck in that ocean's sweet to me.

EPISODES IN THE ADVENTURES OF M. D'HARICOT.

(Translated from the original French by J. STORER CLOUSTON.)

THE MONSIEUR PURSUES THE FOX AND OTHER GAME.

I.

"And then I came to another castle where lived a giant whose name was John Bull."—MAUNDERVILLE (*adapted*).

"Do you dance?" asked Teddy.

"All night if you will play to me," I replied.

"Ride?" said he.

"On a horse? Yes, my friend, I can even ride a horse."

"Well then, I say, d'you care to come to a ball at Senechal Court, the Trevor-Hudson's place; meet next day and that sort of thing? Dick and I are going—we'll be there about a week."

"But I do not know the—the very excellent people you have named."

"Oh, that's all right," said Teddy. "They want a man or two, so few men dance nowadays, don't you know? I keep it up myself a little; girls get sick if I don't hop round with 'em now and then. Hullo! I see you have a card from my mater for the 29th. Don't go, whatever you do; sure to be dull. The mater's shows always are. What did you think of that girl the other night? Ha! ha! Told you so; I know all about women. What's this book you're reading? French, by Jove! Pretty stiff, isn't it? Oh, of course you are French, aren't you? That makes a difference, I suppose. Well

then, you'll come with us? Thursday first; I'll let you know the train."

"May I bring my Halfred?" I inquired.

"Rather—looks well to have a man with you. I'd bring mine, only he makes a fuss if he can't have a bedroom looking south, and one can't insist on people giving him that. Au revoir, mossoc."

This was on Monday, so I had but little time for preparation. Halfred was at once taken into consultation.

"I am going to hunt," I said, "also to a ball; and you are coming with me. Prepare me for the ballroom and the chase. What do I require beyond the things I already have?"

"A pink coat and a 'ard 'at, sir," said he with great confidence. "Likewise top-boots and white gloves for to dance in, not forgettin' a pair o' spurs and a whip."

"I shall get the hat, the coat, and the boots. Gloves I have already. You will buy me the spurs and the whip. By the way, have you ever hunted, Halfred?"

"Not exactly 'unted myself, sir," said he. "But I've seen the 'unt go by and knowed a lot o' 'unting men. Then bein'

connected with hosses so much myself I've naterally took a hinterest in the turf and the racin'-stable."

"You are a judge of horses?" I asked.

"Well, sir, I am generally considered to know something about 'em. In fact, sir, Mr Widdup—that's the gentleman what give me the testimonial—he's said to me more nor once, —'Halfred,' says he, 'what you don't know about these 'ere hanimals would go into a pill-box comfortable.'"

"Good!" I said. "Find me two hunters that I can hire for a week."

The little man looked me up and down with a discriminating eye.

"Something that can carry a bit o' weight, sir, and stand a lot o' hard ridin'; that's what you need, sir."

Now I am not heavy, nor had circumstances hitherto given me the opportunity of riding excessively hard; but the notion that I was indeed a gigantic Nimrod tempted my fancy, and I am ashamed to confess that I fell.

"Yes," I said, "that is indeed what I require."

"Leave it to me, sir," he assured me with great confidence. "I'll make all the arrangements."

My mind was now easy, and for the two following days I studied all the English novels relating to field sports, and the articles on hunting in the encyclopedias and almanacs; so that when Thursday arrived and I met my friends at the station, I felt myself qualified

to take part with some assurance in their arguments on the chase. We are a receptive race, we French, and the few accomplishments we have not actually created, we can at least quickly comprehend and master.

Next door to us, in a second-class compartment, Halfred was travelling, and attached to our train was the horse-box containing the two hunters he had engaged. I had had one look at them, and certainly there seemed to be no lack of bone and muscle.

"Mr Widdup and me 'ired 'em, sir," said Halfred. "From a particular friend o' ours what can be trusted. Jumps like fleas, they do, he says, and 'as been known to run for sixty-five miles without stoppin' more'n once or twice for a drink. 'Ard in the mouth and 'igh in the temper, says he, just the very thing for a gentleman in good 'ealth what doesn't 'unt regular, and likes 'is money's worth when he does."

"You have exactly described me," I replied.

But if I had the advantage over my two friends in the suite I was taking with me, Teddy Lumme certainly led the way in conversation. He was vastly impressed with the importance of our party (a sentiment he succeeded in communicating to the guard and the other officials), also with the respectability of the function we were going to attend, and with the inferiority of other travellers on that railway. This air of triumphal progress or coronation pro-

cession was still further increased by the indefatigable attentions of Halfred, who at every station ran to our carriage door, touched his hat, and made inquiries concerning our comfort and safety; so that more than once a loyal cheer was raised as the train steamed out again, and Dick even declared that at an important junction he perceived the Lord Mayor's daughter approaching with a basket of flowers. Unfortunately, however, she did not reach our carriage in time.

"Where are your horses, Teddy?" asked Dick. "Coming down by a special train?"

"Oh, they are mounting me," said Teddy. "Trevor-Hudson always keeps a couple of his best for me. What are you doing?"

"Following on a bicycle," replied Dick. "My five grooms and six horses haven't turned up."

"My dear Shafthead," I said, "I shall lend you one of mine."

"Many thanks," he answered, with gratitude, no doubt, but with less enthusiasm than I should have expected. "Unfortunately I've seen 'em."

"Then you do not care to ride them?" I asked, with some disappointment I confess.

"Not alone," said Dick. "If you'll lend me Halfred to sit behind and keep the beast steady I don't mind trying."

"Very well," I said with a shrug.

This strain of brutality that is peculiarly British occasionally disfigures my dear Dick. Yet I continue to love him: judge then of his virtues.

"Are they good fencers?" asked Lumme.

"I have not yet seen them with the foils," I replied, smiling politely at what seemed a foolish joke.

"I mean," said he, "do they take their jumps well?"

"Pardon," I laughed. "Yes, I am told they are excellent—if the wall's not too high. We shall not find them more than six feet?"

But I was assured that obstacles of more than this elevation would not be met very frequently.

"Do they take water all right?" asked the inquisitive Teddy again.

"Both that and corn," I replied; "but Halfred will attend to these matters."

English humour is peculiar. I had not meant to make a jest; yet I was applauded for this simple answer.

"Tell me what to look for in my hosts," I said to Dick presently.

"Money and money's worth," he replied.

"What we call the *nouveau riche*?" I asked.

"On the contrary, what is called a long pedigree nowadays; two generations of squires, two of captains of industry (I think that is the proper term), and before that the imagination of the Heralds' office. There is also a pretty daughter—isn't there, Teddy?"

"Quite a nice little thing," said Lumme graciously.

"I thought you rather fancied her."

"I'm off women at present," the venerable *roué* declared.

Dick's grin at hearing this sentiment was more eloquent than any comment.

But now we had reached our destination. Halfred and a very stately footman, assisted by the station-master, the ticket-collector, and all the porters, transferred our baggage to a handsome private omnibus; then Halfred having arranged that the horses should be taken to stables in the village (since my host's were full), we all bowled off between the hedgerows.

It was a beautiful November evening, still clear overhead and red in the west; the air was very fresh after the streets of London; our horses rattled at a most exhilarating pace.

"My faith!" I exclaimed, "this is next to heaven. I shall be buried in the country!"

"Those hunters of yours ought to manage it for you," observed Dick.

Yet I forgave him again.

We turned through an imposing gateway, and now we were in a wide and charming English park. Undulating turf and stately trees spread all round us and ended only in the dusk of the evening; a herd of deer galloped from our path; rooks cawed on the branches overhead; a gorgeous pheasant ran for shelter towards a thicket. Then, on one side, came an ivy-covered wall, over whose top high dark evergreens stood up like Ethiopian giants. Evidently these were the gardens, and in a moment more we were before the house itself.

As I went from the carriage to the door I had just time, and light, to see that it was a very great mansion,—not old apparently, but tempered enough by time to inspire a kindly feeling of respect. A high tower rose over the door, and along the front on either side creepers climbed between the windows, and these gave an impression at once of stateliness and home.

By the aid of two servants, who were nearly as tall as the tower, we were led first through an ample vestibule adorned with a warlike array of spears. These, I was informed, belonged to the bodyguard of my host when he was High Sheriff of his county; and this explanation, though it took from them the romance of antiquity, gave me, nevertheless, a pleasanter sensation than if they had been brandished at Flodden. They were a relic not of a dead but a living feudalism, a symbol that a sovereign still ruled this land. And this reminded me of the reason I was here and the cause for which I still hoped to fight, and for a moment it saddened me.

But again I commit the crime of being serious; also the still less pardonable offence of leaving my two friends standing outside the doors of the hall.

Hastily I rejoin them, the doors open, a buzz of talk within suddenly subsides, and we march across the hall in single file to greet our host and hostess. What I see during this brief procession is a wide high room, a gallery running round it, a great fireplace at

the farther end, and a company of nearly twenty people sitting or standing near the fire and engaged in the consumption of tea and the English crumpet.

I am presented, received in a very offhand fashion, told to help myself to tea and crumpet, and then left to my own devices. Lumme and Shafthead each find an acquaintance to speak to, my host and hostess turn to their other guests, and with melted butter oozing from my crumpet into my tea, I do my best to appear oblivious of the glances which I feel are being directed at me. I look irresolutely towards my hostess. She is faded, affected, and talkative; but her talk is not for me, and in fact she has already turned her back. And my host? He is indeed looking at me fixedly out of a somewhat bloodshot eye while he stuffs tea-cake into a spacious mouth; but when I meet his gaze, he averts his eyes. A cheerful couple—a kindly reception!

What does it mean? I ask myself. Has Lumme exceeded his powers in bringing me here? I remember that at his invitation Mrs Trevor-Hudson sent me a brief note of invitation, but possibly she repented afterwards. Or is my appearance so unpleasant? In France, I tell myself, it was not generally considered repulsive. In fact, I can console myself with several instances to the contrary; but possibly English standards of taste are different.

At last I venture to accost a gentleman who at the moment is also silent.

"Have you also come from London?" I ask.

"I? No. Live near here," he says, and turns to resume his conversation with a lady.

I am seriously thinking of taking my departure before there is any active outbreak of hostility, when I see a stout gentleman with a very red face approaching me from the farther side of the fireplace. I have noticed him staring at me with, it seemed, undisguised animosity, and I am preparing the retort with which I shall answer his request to immediately leave the house, when he remarks in a bluff, cheerful voice as he advances—

"Bringin' your horses, I hear."

"I am, sir," I reply in great surprise.

"Lumme was tellin' me," he adds genially. "Ever hunted this country before?"

Then in a moment I find myself engaged in a friendly conversation, which is as suddenly interrupted by a very beautifully dressed apparition with a very long moustache who calls my stout friend "Sir Henry," and consults him about an accident that has befallen his horse. But I have begun to see the theory of this reception. It is the Englishman's idea of making you—and himself—feel at home. You eat as much cake as you please, talk to anybody you please, remain silent as long as you please, leave the company if you please and smoke a pipe, and you are not interfered with by any one while doing these

things. To introduce you to somebody might bore you; you may not be a conversationalist, and may prefer to stand and stare like a surfeited ox. Well, if such are your tastes, it would be interfering with the liberty of the subject to cross them. What was the use in King John signing the Magna Charta if an Englishman finds himself compelled to be agreeable?

This idea having dawned upon me, and my courage returned, I cast my eyes round the company, and selecting the prettiest girl, made straight at her. She received me with a smiling eye and the most delightful manner possible, and as she talked and I looked more closely at her, I saw that she was even fairer than I thought.

Picture a slim figure rather under middle height, a bright eye that sparkled as though there were dew upon it, piquant little features that all joined in a frequent and quite irresistible smile, and finally dress this dainty demoiselle in the most fascinating costume you can imagine. Need it be said

that I was soon emboldened to talk quite frankly, and presently to ask her who some of the company were?

"Sir Henry" turned out to be Sir Henry Horley, a prosperous baronet who scarcely ever left the saddle; the gentleman with the long moustache to be Lord Thane, an elder son with political aspirations; while the man I had first accosted was no less a person than Mr H. Y. Tonks, the celebrated cricketer.

"And now will you point out to me Miss Trevor-Hudson?" I asked. "I hear she is very beautiful."

"Who told you that?" she inquired with a more charming smile than ever.

"Her admirers," I answered.

The girl raised her eyebrows, shot me the archest glance in the world, and pointing her finger to her own breast, said simply—

"There she is."

I said to myself that though my friend Teddy Lumme was "off women," I at any rate was not.

II.

"Our language is needlessly complicated. Why, for instance, have two such words as 'woman' and 'discord,' when one would serve?"—LA RABIDE.

Presently the men retired to smoke, and for an hour or two I had to tear myself away from the smiles of Miss Trevor-Hudson. The smoking-room opened into the billiard-room, and some played pool while the rest of us sat about the fire and discussed agriculture,

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whom the different speakers were, you can please your fancy.

1st *Sportsman*. "Are your turnips large?"

2nd *S*. "Not so devilish bad. Did you go to the meet on Tuesday?"

1st *S*. "Yes, and I noticed Charley Tootle there."

3rd *S*. "Ridin' his bay horse or his black?"

1st *S*. "The bay."

4th *S*. "Oats make better feeding."

2nd *S*. "My man prefers straw."

1st *S*. "Did you fish this summer?"

3rd *S*. "No, I shot buffaloes instead."

1st *S*. "Where—Kamschatka or Japan?"

3rd *S*. "Japan. Kamschatka's getting overshot."

5th *S*. "Do you supply your pheasants with warm water?"

2nd *S*. "I am having it laid on."

5th *S*. "What system do you use?"

2nd *S*. "Two-inch pipes attached by a rotatory tap to the conservatory cistern."

5th *S*. "Sounds a devilish good notion."

1st *S*. "Now let me tell you my experience of those self-lengthening stirrups."

And so on till the booming of a gong summoned us to dress for dinner.

"Well," said Dick, as we went to our rooms. "You looked as though your mind was being improved."

"It is trying to become adjusted," I replied.

On our way we passed along

the gallery overlooking the hall, and suddenly I was struck by the contrast between this house and its inhabitants: on the one hand the splendid proportions and the dignity of this great hall, dark under the oak beams of the roof, firelight and lamplight falling below upon polished floor and carpets of the East; the library lined with what was best in English literature, the walls with the worthiest in English art; on the other my heavy-eyed host full of port and prejudices, and as meshed about by unimaginative limitations as any strawberry-bed. Possibly I am too foreign and only see the surface, but then how is one to suspect a gold mine beneath a vegetable garden?

At dinner I found myself seated between Lady Thane and Miss Rosalie Horley. Lady Thane, wife of the nobleman with the big moustache, had an attractive face but took herself seriously. In a man this is dangerous, in a woman fatal. I turned to my other neighbour and partly obtained my consolation there.

She was young, highly coloured, hearty, and ingenuous, and so appreciative a listener as nearly to suffocate herself with an oyster-paté when I told her how I had burgled Fisher. The remainder of my consolation I obtained from the prospect, directly opposite, of Miss Trevor-Hudson. She was sitting next to Teddy Lumme, and if it had not been for his express declaration to the contrary I should have said he was far from insusceptible to

her charms. Yet, since I knew his real sentiments, I did not hesitate to distract her glance when possible.

After dinner, a great bustling among the ladies, a great putting on of overcoats and lighting of cigars among the men, and then we all embarked in an immense omnibus and clattered off to the ball. This dance was being held in the county town some miles away, so that for more than half an hour I sat between Dick and Teddy on a seat behind the driver's, my cigar between my teeth, a very excellent dinner beneath my overcoat, and my heart as light as a sparrow's. On either side the rays of our lamps danced like fireflies along the woods and hedgerows, but my fancy seemed to run still faster than these meteor companions, and already I pictured myself claiming six dances from Miss Trevor-Hudson.

But now other lights began to appear, twinkling through trees before us, and presently we were clattering up the High Street of the market town. Other carriages were already congregated about the assembly rooms at the "Chequered Boar." A crowd of spectators had gathered before the door to stare at visions of lace and jewellery, the strains of the band came through an open window, and altogether there was an air of revelry that I suppose only visited the little borough once a-year. Inside the doors, waiters with shining heads and ruddy faces waved us on up and down

stairs and along passages, where at intervals we met other guests as resplendent as ourselves, till at last we reached the ballroom itself.

This was a low long room with a shining floor, an old-fashioned wall-paper decorated with a pattern of pink roses, and a great blaze of candles to light it up. It was evident that many generations of squires must have danced beneath those candles and between those rose-covered walls, and this suggestion of old-worldness had a singularly pleasant flavour.

In a recess about the middle of the room the orchestra were tuning up for another waltz; at one end the more important families were assembling, at the other the lesser. Need I say that we joined the former group?

In English country dances it is usually the custom to have programmes on which you write the names of your partners for the evening. I now looked round to secure one particular partner, but she was not to be seen. The waltz had begun; I scanned the dancers. There was Shafthead tearing round with Miss Horley, his athletic figure moving well, his good features lit by a smile he could assume most agreeably when on his best behaviour; there was the stout Sir Henry revolving with the more deliberate pomp of sixty summers; but where were the bright eyes? Suddenly I spied the skirt of a light blue dress through the opening of a doorway. I rushed for it, and

there out in the passage was the misogynist Lumme, evidently entreating Miss Trevor-Hudson for more dances than she was willing to surrender. For her sake this must be stopped.

"I have come to make a modest request," I said. "Will you give me a dance—or possibly two?"

With the sweetest air she took her programme from the disconcerted and I do not think very amiable Teddy, and handed it to me.

"I have taken three, seven, and fourteen," I said, giving it back to her.

"Fourteen is mine," cried Teddy.

"Not now," I said, smiling.

"I had booked it," said he.

"Your name was not there," I replied. "And now, Miss Hudson, if you are not dancing this dance, will you finish it with me?"

She took my arm, and the baffled despiser of women was left in the passage.

This may seem hard treatment to be dealt out to a friend, and indeed I fear that though outwardly calm, and even polite to exaggeration, my indignation had somewhat run away with me. Had I any excuse? Yes; two eyes that, as I have said, were bright as the dew, and a smile not to be resisted!

She danced divinely, she let me clasp her hand tenderly but firmly, and she smiled at me when she was dancing with others. I noticed once or twice when we danced together that Lumme also smiled at her, but I was convinced she did not reply to this. In fact, his

whole conduct seemed to me merely presumptuous and impertinent. How mine seemed to him I cannot tell you.

He had secured the advantage of engaging several dances before I had time to interfere, and also possessed one other—a scarlet evening coat, the uniform of the hunt. But I glanced in the mirror and said to myself that I did not grudge him this adornment, while as for my fewer number of dances, I found my partner quite willing to allow me others to which I was not legally entitled. In this way I obtained number thirteen, to the detriment of Mr Tonks, and was just prepared to embark upon number fourteen when Lumme approached us with an air I did not approve of.

"This is my dance," he said in a manner inexcusable in the presence of a lady.

"Pardon," I replied. "It is mine."

Miss Hudson looked from one to the other of us with a delightfully perplexed expression, but I fear with a little wickedness in her brown eye.

"What am I to do?" she said, with a shrug of her shoulders.

"It is my dance," repeated Teddy, glaring fixedly at me.

I shrugged my shoulders, smiled, and offered her my arm to lead her away.

"I am sorry, Mr Lumme," said the cause of this strife sweetly; "but I am afraid Mr D'Haricot's name is on my programme."

Teddy made a tragic bow that would have done credit to a dyspeptic frog, and I

danced off with my prize. At the end of the waltz he came up to me with a carefully concocted sneer.

"You know how to sneak dances, mossyours," he observed. "Do you do everything else as well?"

I kept my temper and replied suavely, "Yes; I shoot tolerably with the pistol, and can also use the foils."

"Like your cab-horses?" sneered Teddy, taking no notice, however, of the implied intimation to console himself if aggrieved. "I am keen to see how long you stick on top of those beasts."

"Good, my friend!" I replied; "I take that as a challenge to ride a race. We shall see to-morrow who first catches the fox!"

III.

"With his horse and his hounds in the morning!"—*English ballad.*

When I awoke next morning my first thoughts were of a pair of brown eyes, dainty features that smiled up at me, and a voice that whispered as we danced for the last time together, "No, I shall not forget you when you are gone."

Then quickly I remembered the sport before me and the challenge to ride to the death with the rival who had crossed my path.

"Halfred!" I said.

The little man looked up from the pile of clothes he was folding in the early morning light, and stopped the gentle hissing that accompanied, and doubtless lightened, every task.

"Fasten my spurs on firmly," I said. "I shall ride hard to-day."

He cannot have noticed the grave note in my voice, for he replied in his customary cheerful fashion—

"If everything sticks on as well as the spurs, sir, you won't 'ave nothin' to complain of."

"I shall ride very hard, Halfred."

"'Arder nor usual, sir?" he asked with a look of greater interest.

"Vastly, immeasurably!"

"What's hup, sir?" he exclaimed in some concern now.

"I have made a little bet with Mr Lumme," I answered in a serious voice. "A small wager that I shall be the first to catch the fox. If you can make a suggestion that may help me to win, I shall be happy to listen to it."

"Catch the fox, sir?" he repeated thoughtfully, scratching his head. "Well, sir, it seems to me there's nothin' for it but startin' hoff first and not lettin' 'im catch you up. I 'aven't 'unted myself, sir, but I've 'eard tell as 'ow a sharp gent sometimes spots the fox afore any of the hothers. That's 'ow to do it, in my opinion."

I thought this over, and the scheme seemed excellent.

"We shall arrange it thus," I said. "You will mount one horse and I the other. We shall ride together and look for the fox."

Conceive my servant's delight! I do not believe that if I had offered him a hundred pounds he would have felt so much joy.

I dressed myself with the most scrupulous accuracy, for I was resolved that nothing about me should suggest the novice. My pink coat fitted to within half a little wrinkle in an unobtrusive place, my breeches were a miracle of sartorial art, the reflection from my top-boots perceptibly lightened the room. No one at the breakfast-table "cut more dash." I had secured a seat beside Miss Trevor-Hudson, and we jested together with a friendliness that must have disturbed Lumme, for he watched us furtively with a dark look on his face and never addressed a word to a soul all the time.

"I shall expect you to give me a lead to-day," she said to me.

"Are you well mounted?" I asked.

"I am riding my favourite grey."

"Ride hard, then," I said loud enough for Lumme to hear me; "the lead I give will be a fast one!"

Before breakfast was over we had been joined by guest after guest who had come for the meet. Outside the house, carriages and dog-carts, spectators on foot, grooms with horses, and sportsmen who had already breakfasted were assembled in dozens, and the crowd was growing greater every moment. I adjusted my shining hat upon my head and went out to look for Halfred. There he was, the

centre evidently of considerable interest and admiration, perched high upon one of the gigantic and noble quadrupeds, and grasping the other by the reins. His livery of deep plum-colour, relieved by yellow cording, easily distinguished him from all other grooms, while my two steeds appeared scarcely to be able to restrain their generous impatience, for it required three villagers at the head of each to control their exhilaration.

"I congratulate you," I said to my servant. "The *tout ensemble* is excellent."

At that moment his mount began to plunge like a ship at sea, and the little man went up and down at such a rate that he could only gasp.

"'Old 'im, you there chaw-bacons! 'Old 'im tight! 'E won't 'urt you!"

In response to this petition the villagers leapt out of range and uttered incomprehensible sounds, much to my amusement. This, however, was changed to concern when I observed my own steed suddenly stand upon end and flourish his forelegs like a heraldic emblem.

"You have overfed them with oats," I said to Halfred severely.

"Oats be——!" he began, and then pitched on to the mane. "Oats be——!" and here he just clutched the saddle in time to save himself from retreating over the tail. "Oats be blowed!"

"It ain't oats that's the matter with 'em," said a bluff voice behind me.

I turned and saw Sir Henry

looking with an experienced eye at the performance.

"What is it?" I replied.

"Vice," said he. "I know that fiddle-headed brute well, no mistakin' him. It's the beast that broke poor Oswald's neck last season. His widow sold him to a dealer at Rugby for fifteen pounds, and by Jove here he is again just waitin' to break yours!"

He turned his critical eye to Halfred's refractory steed.

"And I think I remember that dancin' stallion too," he added grimly. "Gad, you'll have some fun to-day, monsieur!"

This was cheerful, but there was no getting out of it now; indeed the huntsman and the pack were already leading the way to the first covert, and everybody was on the move behind them. I mounted my homicide during one of its calmer intervals, the villagers bolted out of the way, and in a moment we were clearing a course through the throng like a charge of cavalry.

"Steady there, steady!" bawled the Master of the hunt. "Keep back, will you?"

With some difficulty I managed to take my mount, plunging and sidling out to where Halfred was galloping in circles at a little distance from the rest of the field.

"Where are the hounds?" I cried. "Where is the fox?"

"In among them trees," replied Halfred, as we galloped together towards the Master.

"Let us go after them!" I exclaimed. "Lumme waits be-

hind with the others, now is our chance!"

"Come on, sir!" said Halfred, and we dashed past the Master at a pace that scarcely gave us time to hear the encouraging cry with which he greeted us.

The wood was small but the trees were densely packed, and it was only by the most miraculous good luck, aided also by skilful management, that we received no injury from the branches. Somewhere before us we could hear the baying of the hounds, and we directed our course accordingly. Suddenly there arose a louder clamour, and we caught a glimpse of white-and-tan forms leaping towards us. But we scarcely noticed these, for at that same instant we had espied a small brown animal slipping away almost under our horses' feet.

"The fox!" cried Halfred.

"The fox!" I shouted, leaning forward and aiming a blow at it with my whip.

With a loud cheer we turned and burst through the covert in hot pursuit, and easily distancing the hounds, broke into the open with nothing before us but Reynard himself. Figure to yourself the sensation!

Ah, that I could inoculate you with some potent fluid that should set your blood on fire and make you feel the intoxication of that chase as you read my poor bald words!

Over a fence we went and descended on the other side, myself hatless, Halfred no longer perched upon the saddle

but clinging manfully to the more forward portions of his steed. Then through a wide field of grass we tore. This field was lined all down the farther side by a hedge of thorns quite forty feet high, which the English call a "bull-rush." At one corner I observed a gate, and having never before charged such a barrier, I endeavoured to direct my horse towards this. But no! he had seen the fox go through the hedge, and I believe he was inspired by as eager a desire to catch it as I was myself. I shut my eyes, I lowered my head, I felt my cheek torn by something sharp, and heard a swish of breaking branches, and then behold I was on the farther side! My spurs had instinctively been driven harder into my horse's flank, and though I had long since dropped my whip, they proved sufficient to encourage him to still greater exertions.

Finding that he was capable of directing his course unassisted, and perceiving also that he had taken the bit so firmly between his teeth as to prevent the possibility of my guiding him with any certainty, I discarded the reins (which of course were now unnecessary) and confined my attention to seeing that he should not be

hampered by my slipping in the saddle. One brief glance over my shoulder showed me his stable companion following hard, in spite of the inconvenience of having to support his rider upon his neck, and racing alongside came the foremost hounds. Behind the pack were scattered in a long procession pink coats and galloping horses, dark habits and more galloping horses. I tried to pick out my rival, but at that instant my horse rose to another fence, and my attention was distracted.

Another field, this time ploughed, and a stiffer job now for my good horse! Yet he would certainly overtake our quarry in a few minutes longer had he selected that part of the next fence I wished him to jump. But, alas! he must take it at its highest, and the ploughed field had proved too exhausting. We rose, there was a crash, and I have a dim recollection of wondering on which portion of my frame I should fall. Then I knew no more till I found myself in the arms of the faithful Halfred, with neither horse, hounds, fox, nor huntsmen in sight.

"Did you catch it?" I asked.

"No, sir," said he; "but I give it a rare fright!"

But I had scarcely heard the consoling news before I swooned away again.

IV.

"You feel yourself insulted? That is fortunate, for otherwise I should have been compelled to!"
—HERCULE D'ENVILLE.

Picture me now stretched upon a sofa in the very charming morning-room of Seneschal Court, a little bruised, a little shaken still, but making a quick progress towards recovery. Exasperating no doubt to be inactive and an invalid when others are well and spending the day in hunting and shooting, but I had two consolations. First of all, Lumme had not beaten me. He too had been dismounted a few fields farther on, and though he had ridden farthest, yet I had gone fastest, and could fairly claim to have at least divided the honours. But consolation number two would, I think, have atoned even in the absence of consolation number one. In two words this comfort was my nurse. Yes, you can picture Amy Trevor-Hudson sitting by the side of that sofa, intent upon a piece of fancy work that progresses at the rate of six stitches a-day, yet not so intent as to be unable to converse with her guest and patient.

"You are really feeling better to-day?" she asks with that sparkling glance of her brown eyes that accompanies every word, however trivial.

"Thank you, I have eaten two eggs and a plate of bacon for breakfast, and I should doubtless be looking forward now to lunch if my thoughts

were not so much more pleasantly employed."

"Are you thinking, then, that you will soon be well enough to go away?"

"I am thinking," I reply, "that for some days I shall still be invalid enough to lie here and talk to you."

She does not look up at this, but I can see a charming smile steal over her face and stay there while I look at her.

"Who did you say these things to last?" she inquires presently, still looking at her work.

"What things? That I am fond of luncheon—or that I am fond of you?"

"I meant," she replies, looking at me this time with the archest glance, "what girl did you last tell that you were fond of her?"

Now honestly I cannot answer this question off-hand with accuracy. I should have to think, and that is not good for an invalid.

"I cannot tell you, because I do not remember her," I reply.

She puts a wrong construction upon this, as I had anticipated.

"I don't believe you," she says; "I am sure you must have said these things before."

"If you think my words are false, how can I help myself?" I ask, with the air of one impaled upon an ignited stake,

yet resigned to this position. "I dare not dispute with you even to save my character, for fear you become angry and leave me."

She smiles again, gives me another dazzling glance, and then, with the elusiveness of woman, turns the subject to this wonderful piece of work that she is doing.

"What do you think of this flower?" she asks.

To obtain the critical reply she desires entails her coming to the side of the couch and holding one edge of the work while I hold the other. Then I endeavour to hold both edges and somehow find myself holding her hand as well. It happens so naturally that she takes no notice of this occurrence, but stands there smiling down at me and talking of this flower, while I look up at her face and talk also of the flower. In fact, she seems first conscious of that chance encounter of hands when a step is heard in the passage. Then indeed she withdraws to her seat, and the very faintest rise in colour might be distinguished by one who had acquired the habit of looking at her closely.

It was Dick Shafthead who entered in riding-breeches and top-boots. I may say, by the way, that he had not been reduced to a bicycle. On the contrary, he made an excellent display upon a horse for one who affected to be too poor to ride.

"My horse went lame," he explained; "so I thought I'd come back and have a look at the patient."

From his look I could see that he was unprepared to find me already provided with a nurse. Not that it was the first time she had been here, but then I did not happen to have mentioned that to Dick. In a few minutes Amy left us, and he looked with a quizzical smile first at the door through which she had gone and then at me.

"You take it turn about, I see," he said. "I didn't know the arrangement or I shouldn't have interrupted."

"I beg your pardon?" I replied. "Either my head is still somewhat confused or I do not understand English as well as I thought."

"I imagined Teddy was having a walk over," said he with a laugh.

None are so quick of apprehension as the jealous. Already a dark suspicion smote me.

"Do you allude to Miss Trevor-Hudson?" I asked.

"Who else?"

"And you thought Teddy was having what you call a 'walk over'?"

"I did," said Dick. "But it is none of my business."

"It is my business," I replied, "to see that this charming lady does not have her name associated with a man she only regards as a merest acquaintance."

"Has she told you that is how she looks on Teddy?"

"She has."

Dick laughed outright.

"What are your hours?" he asked. "When does Miss Hudson visit the sick-bed?"

"If you must know," I re-

plied, "she has had the kindness to visit me every morning. Also in the evening."

"Then Teddy has the afternoons," said he.

"But he has been hunting."

"He comes home after lunch, I notice," laughed Dick.

I became angry.

"Do you mean that Miss Hudson—?"

"Is an incorrigible flirt? Yes," said he.

"Shafthead, you go too far!" I cried.

"My dear monsieur, I withdraw and I apologise," he answered with his most disarming smile. "Have it as you wish. Only—don't let her make a fool of you."

He turned and walked out of the room whistling, and I was left to digest this dark thought. Certainly it was true that I did not see much of her in the afternoons, but then, I argued, she has doubtless household duties. Her mother was an affected woman, who loved posing as an invalid and had stayed in her room ever since the ball. Therefore she had to entertain the guests; and now I come to think of it, Lumme would naturally press his suit whenever he saw the chance, and how could she protect herself? Certainly she could never compare that ridiculous little man with—well, with any one you please. It was absurd! I laughed at the thought. Yet I became particularly anxious to see her again.

In the evening she came for a few minutes to cheer my solitude. She could not stay; yet she sat down. I must be

very sensible; yet she listened to my compliments with a smile. She was ravishing in her simple dress of white that cost, I should like to wager, some fabulous price in Paris; she was charming; she was kind. Yes, she had been created to be a temptation to man, like the diamonds in her hair; and she perfectly understood her mission. Inevitably man must wish to play with her, to caress her, to have her all to himself; inevitably he must get into that state when he is willing to pay any price for this possession. And she was willing to make him—and not unwilling to make another pay also. Indeed I do not think she could conceivably have had too many admirers.

But I did not criticise her thus philosophically that evening. Instead I said to her, "I was afraid I should not see you till to-morrow, and perhaps not to-morrow."

"Not to-morrow?" she asked. "Are you going away, after all?"

"I shall be here; but you?"

"And I suppose I must visit my patient."

"But if Mr Lumme does not go hunting, will you then have time to spare?"

She rose and said, as if offended, "I don't think you want to see me very much."

Yet she did not go. On the contrary, she stood so close to me that I was able to seize her hand and draw her towards me.

"Ah no!" I cried. "Give me my turn!"

"Your turn?" she asked, drawing away a little.

"Yes; what can I hope for but a brief turn? I am but one of your admirers, and if you are as kind to all——"

I paused. She gave me a bright glance, a little smile that drove away all prudence.

"Amy!" I cried, "I have something to give you!"

And I gave her—a kiss.

She protested, but not very stoutly.

"I have something else," I said. And I was about to present her with a very similar offering, indeed I was almost in the act of presentation, when she started from me with a cry of "Let me go!" and before I could detain her she had fled from the room. In her flight she passed a man who was standing at the door, and it was he who spoke next.

"You damned scoundrelly frog-eater!"¹ he remarked.

It was the voice of my rival, Lumme!

"Ah, monsieur!" I exclaimed, springing up, "you have come to act the spy, I see."

"I haven't," he replied. "I came for Miss Hudson—and I came just in time, too!"

"No," I said, "not just; half a minute after."

"You dirty, sneaky French beast!" he cried. "I bring you to a decent house—the first you've ever been to—and you go shamming sick to get a chance of insulting a virtuous girl!"

"Shamming!" I cried. "Insulting? What words are these?"

"Do you mean to say you aren't shamming? You can walk as well as me!"

Unquestionably I was more recovered than I had admitted to myself while convalescence was so pleasant, and, now I had risen from my couch, I discovered to my surprise that there seemed little the matter with me. That, however, could not excuse the imputation. Besides, I had been addressed by several epithets, each one of which conveyed an insult.

"You vile, low, little English pig!" I replied. "You know the consequences of your language, I suppose?"

"I'm glad to see it makes you sit up!" he replied.

I advanced a step and struck him on the face, and then, seeing that he was about to assault me with his fists, I laid him on the floor with a well-directed kick on the chest.

"Now," I said as he rose, "will you fight, or are you afraid?"

"Fight?" he screamed. "Yes, if you'll fight fair, you kicking Froggy!"

"As to the weapons," I replied, "I am willing to leave that question in the hands of our seconds: swords or pistols, it is all the same to me."

He looked for a moment a little taken aback by my readiness.

"Ah," I smiled, "you do not enjoy the prospect very much?"

"If you think I'm going to

¹ It is a legend among the English that we subsist principally upon frogs.—D'H.

funk you with any dashed weapons, you are mistaken," said Teddy hotly. "We don't fight like that in England, but I won't stand upon that. My second is Dick Shafthead."

"And I shall request Mr Tonks to act for me," I replied. "The sooner the better, I presume?"

"To-morrow morning will suit me," said he.

"Very well," I answered. "I shall send a note by my servant to Mr Tonks."

I bowed with scrupulous politeness, and he, with an endeavour to imitate this courtesy, withdrew. Then I rang for Halfred.

V.

"An animal I should define as a man who fights in a sensible way for a reasonable end."—*LA RABIDE.*

Extract from my journal at this time:—

"SENECHAL COURT,
"Wednesday Night.

"All is arranged. Tonks and Shafthead have endeavoured to dissuade us; but words have passed that cannot be overlooked, and Lumme is as resolute to fight as I. I must do him that credit. At last, seeing that we are determined, they have consented to act if we will leave all the arrangements in their hands. We are both of us willing, and all we know is that we meet at daybreak to-morrow in a place to be selected by our seconds. Even the weapons have not yet been decided. Should I fall and this writing pass into the hands of others, I wish them to know that these two gentlemen, Mr Shafthead and Mr Tonks, have done their best to procure a bloodless issue. In these circumstances I also wish Mr Lumme to know that I fully forgive him.

"My will is now made, and Halfred is remembered in it. Another, too, will not find herself forgotten. My watch and chain and my signet ring I have bequeathed to Amy. Farewell, dear maiden! Do not altogether forget me!

"Halfred is perturbed, poor fellow, at the chance of losing a master whom I think he has already learned to venerate. Yet he has a fine spirit, and it is his chief regret that the etiquette of the duel will not permit him to be a spectator.

"'Aim at 'is wind, sir,' he advised me. 'That oughter double 'im up if you gets 'im fair. Then, perhaps, sir, if you was to give 'im the second barrel somewhere about the point of 'is jaw, sir, things would be made more certain like.'

"'But what if he aims at these places himself?' I asked.

"'Duck, sir, the minute you sees 'im a-pulling of 'is trigger, like this, sir.'

"He showed me how to 'duck' scientifically, and I

gravely thanked him. I had not the heart to tell how different are the fatal circumstances of the duel, his devotion touched me so. I have told him to lay out my best dark suit, a white shirt, my patent-leather boots, and a black tie, that will not make a mark for the bullet. He is engaged at present in packing the rest of my things, for whatever the issue, I cannot stay longer here. Farewell again, Amy!

"Now I shall write to my friends in France and warn them of the possibilities that may arise. Then to bed!"

I have given this extract at length that it may be seen how grave we all considered the situation, and also to disprove the common idea that Englishmen do not regard the duel seriously. They are, however, a nation of sportsmen whose warfare is waged against the "furs and feathers," and the refinements of single combats practised elsewhere are little appreciated, as will presently appear.

It was scarcely yet daylight when I left my room and with a little difficulty made my way along dim corridors and down shadowy stairs to the garden door, by which it had been decided that we could most stealthily escape to the rendezvous. Through the trimmed evergreens and the paths where the leaf-fall of the night still lay unswept, I picked my course upon a quiet foot that left plain traces in the dew but made no sound to rouse the sleeping house. A wicket gate led me out into the park, and there I

followed a path towards an oak paling that formed the boundary along that side. At the end of the path a gate in the paling took me into a narrow lane, and this gate was to be our rendezvous.

As I advanced I saw between the trees a solitary figure leaning against the paling, and I was assured that my adversary at least had not failed me. Looking back, I next caught sight of the seconds following me, and I delayed my steps so that I only reached Lumme a minute or so before them. We raised our hats and bowed in silence.

He looked pale, but I could not deny that his expression was full of spirit, and I felt for him that respect which a brave man always inspires in one of my martial race.

His costume I certainly took exception to, for instead of the decorous garments called for by the occasion, he was attired in a light check suit with leather leggings and a pale blue waistcoat, and indeed rather suggested a morning's sport than the business we had come upon. This, however, might be set down to his inexperience, and as a matter of fact he was outdone by our seconds, for in addition to wearing somewhat similar clothes, they each carried a gun and a cartridge-bag. Evidently, I thought, they had brought these to disarm suspicion in case the party were observed. Their demeanour was beyond reproach, and indeed surprising, considering that they had never before acted either as principals or

seconds. They raised their hats and bowed with formality.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said Shafthead.

He took the lead throughout; my second, Tonks, concurring in everything he said.

"You still wish to fight?"

Lumme and I both bowed.

"You both refuse to settle your differences amicably?"

"I refuse," replied Lumme.

"And I certainly," I said.

"Very well," said Dick. "It only remains to assure you that the loser will be decently interred."

Here both he and Tonks were obviously affected by a very natural emotion; but with a distinct effort he cleared his throat and resumed.

"And to tell you the conditions of the combat. Here are the weapons."

Conceive our astonishment when we were each solemnly handed a double-barrelled shotgun and a bag full of number five cartridges! Even Lumme recognised the unsuitability of these firearms.

"I say, hang it!" he exclaimed, "I'm not going to fight with these!"

"Tonks, I protest!" I said warmly. "This is absurd."

"Only things you're going to get," replied Tonks stolidly.

"Gentlemen," said Shafthead, with more courtesy, "you have agreed to fight in any method we decide. If you back out now, we can only suppose that you are afraid of getting hurt, and in that case why do you want to fight at all?"

"All right, then," replied

Lumme with an *élan* I must give him every credit for. "I'm game."

"And I am in your hands," said I, with a shrug that was intended to protest not against the danger but the absurdity of these weapons. "At what distance do we stand?"

"In that matter we propose to introduce another novelty," replied Dick.

"To make it more sporting," explained Tonks.

"Just so," said Dick. "You see that plantation? We are going to put one of you in one end and the other in the other. You have each fifty cartridges, and you can fire as soon as you meet and as often as you please. One of the seconds will remain at either end to welcome the survivor."

"Oh, that's not a bad idea," said Lumme, brightening up.

I had my own opinion on this unheard-of innovation, but I kept it to myself.

"Now you toss for ends," said Tonks. "Call!"

He spun a shilling, and Lumme called "Heads!"

"Heads it is," said Tonks. "Which end?"

"It doesn't make much difference, I suppose," replied Teddy. "I'll start from this end."

"Right you are," said Dick. "Au revoir, monsieur. When you are ready to enter the wood, fire a cartridge to let us know. Here is an extra one I have kept for signalling."

I bowed and followed my second across the lane and through a narrow gate in a high hedge that bounded the

side farthest from the park. Lumme was left with Shaft-head in the lane to make his way to the nearest end of the wood, so that I should see no more of him till we met gun to shoulder in the thickets.

I confess that at that moment I could only think of our past friendship and his genial virtues, and it was with a great effort that I forced myself to recall his insults and harden my heart.

We now walked down a long field shut in by trees on either hand. At the farther end from the lane these plantations almost met, so that they and the hedge enclosed the field all the way round except at one narrow gap.

Here Tonks stopped and turned.

"You enter here," he said, indicating the wood on the right-hand side of this gap, "and you work your way back till you meet him. By the way, if you happen to hear shots anywhere else pay no attention. The keeper often comes out after rabbits in the early morning."

"But if he hears us?" I asked.

"Oh, we've made that right. He knows we are out shooting. Good luck."

I would at least have clasped the hand of possibly the last man I should ever talk with. I should have left some message, said something; but with the phlegmatic coolness of his nation, he had turned away before I had time to reply. For a moment I

watched him strolling nonchalantly from me with his hands in his pockets, and then fired my gun in the air and stepped in to the trees.

Well, it might be an unorthodox method of duelling, but there could be no questioning the element of hazard and excitement. Here was I at one end of a narrow belt of trees, not thirty yards wide and nearly a quarter of a mile in length, and from the other came a man seeking my life. Every moment must bring us nearer together, till before long each thicket, each tree-stem, might conceal the muzzle of his gun. And the trees and undergrowth were dense enough to afford shelter to a whole company.

Three plans only were possible. First, I might remain where I was and trust to catching him unnerved and perhaps careless at the end of a long and fruitless search. But this I dismissed at once as unworthy of a man of spirit, and indeed impossible for my temperament. Secondly, I might advance at an even pace and meet him in the middle. This also I dismissed as being the procedure he would naturally expect me to adopt. Thirdly, I might advance with alacrity and encounter him before I was expected. And this was the scheme I adopted.

At a good pace I pushed my way through the branches and the thorns, wishing now, I must confess, that I had adopted a costume more suitable for this kind of warfare, till I had turned the corner of the field

and advanced for a little distance up the long side. While I was walking down with Tonks I had taken the precaution of noting a particularly large pine which seemed as nearly as possible the half-way mark, but now a disconcerting reflection struck me. That pine was indeed half way down the side of the field, but I had also had half of the end to traverse, so that the point at which we should meet, going at a similar pace, would be considerably nearer than I had calculated. Supposing, then, that Lumme was also hastening to meet me, he might even now be close at hand! I crouched behind a thorn-bush and listened.

It was a still delightful morning; the sun just risen; the air fresh; no motion in the branches. Every little sound could be distinctly heard, and presently I heard one—a body moving in another thicket not ten paces away. I raised my gun, aimed carefully, and pulled the trigger.

The stealthy sound ceased; and instead, a pheasant flew screaming out of the woods. No longer could there be any doubt of my position. I executed a strategic retreat for a short distance to upset my enemy's calculations, and waited for his approach. But I heard nothing except two or three shots from the plantation across the field, where the keeper had evidently begun his shooting. I advanced again, though more cautiously, and in a very short time was brought to a sudden standstill by a movement in the branch over-

head. The diabolical thought flashed through my mind, "He is aiming at me from a tree!" Instantly I raised my gun and discharged both barrels into the leaves. There came down, not Lumme, but a squirrel; yet the incident inspired me with an idea. I chose a suitable tree, and having scrambled up with some difficulty (which was not lessened by the thought that I might be shot in the act), I waited for my rival to pass below.

Five minutes passed; ten; fifteen; I heard more shots from the keeper's gun; I slew two foxes and a pheasant which were ill-advised enough to make a suspicious stir in the undergrowth; but not a sign of Lumme. I had not even heard him fire one shot since the duel began. Some mystery here evidently! Perhaps he was waiting patiently for me to approach within a few paces of the lane whence he started. And I—should I court his cartridges by falling into a trap I had thought of laying myself?

Yet one of us must move, or we should be the laughing-stock of the country-side, and if one of two must attack, the brave man can be in no doubt as to which that is. I descended, and with infinite precautions slowly pushed my way forward, raking with my shot every bush that might conceal a foe. Suddenly between the trees I saw a man—undoubtedly a man this time. I put my hand in my cartridge-bag. One cartridge remaining besides two in my chambers; three cartridges against a man who had

still left fifty! Yet three would be sufficient if I could but get them home.

Carefully I crept on my hands and knees to within a dozen paces; then I raised my head, and behold, it was Tonks I saw standing in the lane and leaning against the railing of the park! But Lumme? Ah, I had it. He had fled!

Shouldering my gun, I stepped out of the wood.

"Hallo!" cried Tonks; "bagged him?"

"No," I said.

"Been hit?" he asked. "You look in rather a mess."

And indeed I did, for my clothes had been rent by the thorns, my face and hands torn, and doubtless I showed also some mental signs of the ordeal I had been through. For remember that though I had not met an adversary I had braved the risk of it at every step. And I had made those steps!

"No," I replied. "I have not even been fired at."

"I heard a regular cannonade," he said.

"Forty-seven times have I fired at a venture," I answered. "And I have not been inaccurate in my aim. In that wood you will find the bodies of four squirrels, five pheasants, and two foxes."

"But where is Lumme?" he replied.

"Fled," I replied, with an intonation of contempt I would not conceal.

"What—funked it?"

"I saw no sign of him."

"By Jove! that's bad," said Tonks, though in so matter-of-course a tone that I was as-

tonished. A man of a sluggish spirit, I fear, was my cricketing second.

"Let us call Shafthead," I said. "For myself, my honour is satisfied, and I shall leave him and you to deal with the runaway."

We walked together along the lane to the gate in the hedge through which we had started for the wood. Through this we could see right down the field, and there coming towards us walked Shafthead and Lumme.

"The devil!" I exclaimed.

"By Jove!" said Tonks.

"Can you explain this?" I asked.

"I? No; unless you passed one another."

"Passed!" I cried scornfully.

I threw the gate open and advanced to meet them. To my surprise, Lumme looked at me with no sign of shame, but rather with indignation.

"Well," he cried to me, "you're a fine man to fight a duel. Been in a ditch?"

"Poltroon!" I replied, "where did you hide yourself?"

"I hide?" said he. "Where have you been hiding?"

"Do you mean to tell me that you men never met?" asked Shafthead.

"Never!" we cried together.

"Tonks," said he, "into which plantation did you put your man?"

"The right-hand one," said Tonks.

"The right!" exclaimed Dick. "Then you have been in different woods! O Tonks, this is scandalous!"

But my second had already turned his head away, and seemed so bowed by contrition that my natural anger somewhat relented.

"Possibly your own directions were not clear," I suggested.

"Ah," said Dick, "I see how it was! He must have turned round, and that made his right hand his left."

"Well," said Lumme, "you've made a nice mess of it. What's to be done?"

"I am in my second's hands," I replied.

"And I think you've fought enough," said Tonks. "How many cartridges did you fire, Lumme?"

"Thirty-two," said he.

"Well, hang it, you've loosed seventy-nine cartridges between you, and that's more than any other duellists I ever heard of. Let's pull up the sticks¹ and come in to breakfast."

"Is honour satisfied?" asked Dick, who had more appreciation of the delicacies of such a sentiment than my prosaic second.

Lumme and I glanced at one another: and we remembered our past intimacy, also perhaps the strain of that fruitless search for one another among those thorny woods.

"Mine is," said Lumme.

"Mine also," said I.

And thus ended what so nearly was a fatal encounter.

VI.

"Heed my words! Beware of women,
Shallowest when overbrimmin',
Deepest when they wish you well!
Tears and trifles, lace and laughter,
The Deuce alone knows what they're after—
And he's too much involved to tell."

—ANON.

We all walked back from the field of battle in a highly amicable frame of mind. Going across the park, Lumme and I fell a little behind our seconds and conversed with the friendliness of two men who have learned to respect one another. We had cordially shaken hands, we laughed, we even jested about the hazards we had escaped; one would think that no more complete understanding could be desired. Yet there was still a little thorn pricking

us both, a thorn that did not come from the woods in which we had waged battle, but lived in the peaceful house before us. Our talk flagged; we were silent; then Teddy remarked—

"I say, I don't want to rake up bygones and that sort of thing, don't you know, but—er—you mustn't try to kiss her again, D'Haricot."

"Try?" I replied, a little nettled at this aspersion on my abilities. "Why not say, You must not kiss her again?"

¹ "Pull up sticks," a football metaphor.—D'H.

"By Jove! did you?" cried Teddy stopping.

I shrugged my shoulders.

"My dear Lumme, the successful man is he who lies about himself and holds his tongue about women."

"Be hanged!" he exclaimed.

"Well, why not be?" I inquired placidly.

"I don't believe it," he asserted.

"Continue a sceptic," I commented.

"She told me she had never kissed any one else," he blurted out.

It was now my turn to start.

"Except whom?" I asked.

"Me; if you must know," said Teddy.

"You kissed her?" I cried.

"Well, it doesn't matter to you."

"Nor does it matter to you that I did," I retorted.

"But did you?" he asked with such a painful look of inquiry that my indignation melted into humour.

"My dear friend," I replied, "I see it all now. She has deceived us both! We are in the same ship, as you would say; two of those fools that women make to pass a wet afternoon."

"You mean that she has been flirting with me?" he asked with a woe-begone countenance.

"Also with me," I answered cheerfully. For a false woman, like spilt cream, is not a matter worth lament.

"I shall ask her," he said after a minute or two.

"Have you ever known a woman before?" I asked.

"I've known dozens of 'em," he replied with some indignation.

"And yet you propose to ask one whether she has been true to you?"

"Why shouldn't I?"

"Because, my friend, you will receive such an answer as a Minister gives to a deputation."

"But they might both tell the truth."

"Neither ever lies," I replied.

"Diplomacy and Eve were invented to obviate the necessity."

This aphorism appeared to give him some food for reflection, or possibly he was merely silenced by a British disgust for anything that was not the roast-beef of conversation.

We had come among the terraces, and the trim yews and hollies of the garden. The long west wing of Seneschal Court with the high tower above it were close before us. Suddenly he stopped behind the shelter of a pruned and castellated hedge, and with the air of a lost traveller seeking for guidance, asked me—

"I say, what are you going to do?"

"Return to London this morning."

"Why?"

"For the same reason that I leave the table when dinner is over."

"You won't see her again?"

"See her? Yes, as I should see the remains of my meal were I to pass through the dining-room. But I shall not sit down again."

I do not think Teddy quite appreciated this metaphor.

"Don't you think she is——" he began, but had some difficulty in finding a word.

"Well served?" I suggested.

"No."

"Digestible, then? No, my friend, I do not think she is very digestible either for you or for me. We get pains inside and little nourishment."

"I like her awfully," said poor Teddy.

"Who would not?" I replied. "If a girl is beautiful, charming, not too chary of her favours and yet not inartistically lavish; if she knows how to let a smile spring from an artless dimple, how to aim a bright eye and shake a light curl; and if she is not too fully occupied with others to spare one an hour or two of these charms, who would not like her? Personally I should adore her,—while it lasted."

"Do you really think she isn't all she seems?" he asked in a doleful voice.

"On the contrary, I think she is more—considerably more. My dear Lumme, I have studied this girl dispassionately, critically, as I would a work of art offered me for sale, and I pronounce my opinion in three words—she is false! I counsel you, my friend, to leave with me this morning."

"And I should advise you to take this *gentleman's* advice," exclaimed a voice behind us in a tone that I cannot call friendly.

We turned, possibly with more precipitation than dignity, to see my Amy herself within five paces of us. Evidently she had just appeared

round the end of the castellated hedge, though how long she had been standing on the other side I cannot pretend to guess. Long enough at any rate to give her a very flushed face and an eye that sparkled more brightly than ever. Indeed, I never saw her to more advantage.

"How dare you," she cried, tears threatening in her voice—"how *dare* you talk of me so?"

"Mademoiselle," I began with conciliatory humility.

"Don't speak to me!" she interrupted, and turned her brown eyes to Lumme. Undoubted tears glistened in them now.

"So you have been listening to this—this *person's* slanders? And you are going away now because you have learned that I am false? I have been offered for sale like a work of art! He has studied me dispassionately!" Here she gave me a look whose wrathful significance I will leave you to imagine.

"Go! Go with him! You may be sure that I shan't ask either of you to stay!"

Never had two men a better case against a woman, and never, I am sure, have two men taken less advantage of it.

"Miss Hudson, I say," began poor Teddy in the tone rather of the condemned murderer than the inexorable judge.

"Don't answer me!" she cried, and turned the eyes back to me. The tears still glistened, but anger shone through them.

"As for you; you—you—*brute!*"

"Pardon me," I replied in a reasonable tone; "the conversation you overheard was intended for another."

"Yes!" she exclaimed; "while you are trying to force your odious attentions on me, you are attacking me all the time behind my back!"

"Behind a hedge," I corrected as pleasantly as possible.

But this did not appear to mollify her.

"You think every woman you meet is in love with you, I suppose?" she sneered. "You may be interested to know that we all think you simply a ridiculous little Frenchman!"

"Little!" I exclaimed, justly incensed at this unprovoked and untrue attack. "What do you then call my friend?"

For Lumme was considerably smaller than I, and might indeed have been termed short.

"He knows what I think of him," she answered; and with this ambiguous remark (accompanied by an equally ambiguous flash of her brown eyes at Teddy) she turned scornfully and hurried to the house.

For a moment we stood silent, looking somewhat foolishly at one another.

"You've done it now," said Teddy at length.

"I have," I replied, my equanimity returning.

"I suppose I'll have to clear

out too. Hang it, you needn't have got me into a mess like this," said he in an injured tone.

"Better a mess than a snare," I retorted. "Let us look up a good train, eat some breakfast, and shake the dust of this house from our feet."

He made no answer, and when we got to the house he tacitly agreed to accompany Shafthead and myself by the 11.25 train.

My things were packed, Hal-fred and a footman were even putting them on the carriage; I was making my adieux, when I observed this dismissed suitor enter the hall with his customary cheerful air and no sign of departure about him.

"Are you ready?" I asked him.

"They've asked me to stay till to-morrow," he replied with a conscious look he could not conceal. "And — er — well, there's really no necessity for going to-day. Good-bye. See you soon in town."

"Good - bye," said Amy sweetly, but with a look in her eyes that belied her voice. "I am so glad we have been able to persuade *one* of you to stay a little longer."

"Better a little fish than an empty dish," I said to myself; and revolving this useful maxim in my mind, I departed from Seneschal Court.

(*To be continued.*)

GOLF AND THE NEW BALL.

A GENERAL survey of the game of golf during the past year seems to establish a fact very comforting to those who followed it and tasted of its pleasures before its great burst into popularity in the early Nineties. Not only has it succeeded in keeping clear of the debasing element of gate-money, to which cricket and football are being surrendered ever more and more, but it has taken a deeper hold of the ordinary player who follows it for physical benefit and recreation. Golf is almost the last of the outdoor games in which man can meet man in friendly rivalry, with no more thought of publicity, prizes, or stakes than he would have in enjoying a rubber of whist. The essential nature of the game is thus reasserting itself, and the great mass of men who play golf care little who is champion or amateur-champion. At first the character of the game seemed likely to be seriously altered for the worse in England under the accumulation of medal competitions, bogey competitions, driving contests, club matches, county cups, and all the dreary pot-rewarded struggles of modern athletics. But as time went on, and the charm of golf as golf without the extrinsic excitement of pots and cups had time to work in men's minds, so organised competitions attracted ever less attention, until to-day we find the proposed county team contests hanging fire, and even club matches languishing. Doubtless there are still too many men who go from club to club on competition days intent on accumulating prizes; but their vocation is falling into ever greater disfavour. The truest delights of golf are known only to the busy man. When the fading of youth has shut out cricket, football, and even lawn-tennis—that fair-weather game—for ever from his possibilities, he begins to recognise the profound virtue of golf. He begins to appreciate what a benefit it is to have an open-air pastime where the sole standard is personal honour, and the only reward a half-crown or free refreshment. That there is a more youthful, more forceful, more skilful golf than his, he is well aware. But he need not bother his head about it. Sufficient unto him the struggle with a friend, the exercise in the open air, and the constant and keen play of human nature under successes or distresses intense enough while the game lasts, but subjects of banter and amusement when it is done. How rarely to be seen now is any specimen of those first victims of a mistaken zeal for the game who carefully recorded their scores in match-play! The book and pencil are now regarded as the signs of the beginner, the duffer, or

the man who ought not to play golf.

Another eminently healthy feature in the golf of to-day is the great diminution in the outcry for perfect courses,—courses in which no bad lie will be found, and where everything on the way to the hole shall be like a croquet-lawn, save perhaps the bunkers, and even they raked and made smooth as a garden path. There is now a more sportsmanlike spirit abroad as to the luck and opportunities of the game. The course has yet to be devised—it was never more than imagined—where the hazards are so placed that everybody shall be on an equal footing in regard to chance. Recently a man—a young, athletic-looking man—was heard complaining in the club-house of a south-coast watering-place that the teeing-grounds were not rolled. Much to the gratification of the old golfer who sat listening, he was unceremoniously laughed out of court. Somebody even made a remark about “dandy-golf.” Outside the putting-green golf always has been somewhat of a rough-and-ready game. It must remain so until men can drive absolutely straight and consistently far; until there are no cross winds, long grass, or earthworms. Pending the coming of that most undesirable time, one player will continue to have a mound between him and the flag and another a straight run-up. For long—let us hope, for ever—it must happen that in many cases the worse drive shall occasionally win the hole. To this aspect

of golf, and indeed in respect of all others in which it makes so powerful an appeal to personal temperament and moral qualities, it is pleasant to record that English players respond in ever larger measure. It was not to be supposed that a people so essentially self-reliant as are the English, a people so little disposed to despise the real for the ideal, would continue long in their vain desire for a glass-roofed golf,—that Kew-Gardens course, where expert seedsmen reared the finest grass, and landscape-gardeners laid out the bunkers and watched over them, under the eye of the jealous bogey attached to each hole. Experience teaches the best of players that even under the most favourable conditions of weather they cannot always command their best game. As nature has plainly left a very wide margin of variation in the player, it is somewhat absurd to seek to provide perfect conditions for his imperfections. Golf, like marriage, was made in heaven, and probably for the same purpose,—the elimination of human conceit. “Ou aye,” said the old caddy to the man who found his ball in a bad lie after an exceptionally long drive, “it’s a trauchlin’ game. I wish I’d never seen’t.” It may seem strange and highly illogical, but it is nevertheless true, that to see his ball run a bunker or jump out of a bush gives a man heart of grace. Ask any winner of a monthly medal or a bogey match-box to lay his hand on his heart and speak truth, and he will confess

that luck played a great part in his success. It went with him and gave him confidence. Analysis would show in many cases that on the play alone, or in respect of the quality of the effort put into the game, the second or third man better deserved to win. Golf is a real pagan game, a game of mysterious gods and influences. Therein consists its witchery over its followers, and as has been said, the English people are the last in the world to cry out against such healthy trials to temper and skill. Hence the spontaneous growth of reverence for the traditions of golf, the game of private struggles between man and man, as played for centuries in gay seriousness in its old Northern home.

In respect of the play of the game, the year is chiefly remarkable for the sustained improvement shown by the professionals of outstanding skill. Improvement seems a strange term to use in connection with Braid, Vardon, Herd, and Taylor; but we have the broad fact that Alec Herd won the Open Championship at Hoylake last June with 307 strokes as compared with the 314 which gave Mr Hilton the victory in 1897. Braid was second in 1897 with 315 strokes, this year he and Vardon tied for second place with 308. Mr Hilton, Taylor, and Kinnell each did 314, which was the winning score in 1897. It would seem that as the younger players climb up, the veterans ascend always farther out of their reach. It is pleasing to welcome in Mr Robert Max-

well an amateur player who is likely to challenge the supremacy of the best of the professionals. Mr Maxwell's four rounds were all in the Seventies, and with a total of 309—two more than the winning score—he took fourth place after Braid and Vardon's tie. On the other hand, Mr Maxwell by no means justified himself in the Amateur Championship, which was also played at Hoylake, seeing that he lost a won game to Mr Sidney Fry in the penultimate round. As Mr James Robb in the same round fell before Mr Charles Hutchings, the chance of Scotland vanished for the year. The victory of Mr Hutchings was popular, for golfers liked to think that a man who was well on for forty years of age when he took up the game, and is now past fifty, should be able to gain the coveted title of Amateur Champion. At this rate we may hope to see Mr John Ball regain his old pre-eminence. It were much to be desired. Amateur golf as played by Mr Ball and the late Lieutenant Tait in their matches—we say nothing of their score efforts—had a quality about it that is sadly lacking to-day. Both were always ready to play friendly matches with the leading professionals, and keep the renown of the most ancient form of the game alive. We mean no disrespect to the present Amateur Champion when we say that the gap between amateur and professional golf is widening every day. To be sure, the professional golfer of to-day is in every respect a vast improvement on the average

of his predecessors. Character as well as skill is now demanded, and for this desirable state of affairs we have to thank the circumstances which make it necessary for the professionals to accept service with a Golf Club. One of their number, J. H. Taylor, has recently published a book in which he declares that the lot of the professional golfer is not altogether a happy one. He compares his gains with those of the professional footballer or cricketer who gets a "benefit"; and he pleads for bigger prizes and more of them. The game will fall from its present high position, he considers, if golf professionals are not better rewarded. Hardly, we think. The analogy with cricket and football is a very false one, and, moreover, is one not likely to excite public enthusiasm to provide more prize money, or money rewards, for golf professionals. On the contrary, any attempt to bring golf into line with cricket and football as a big prize and gate-money organisation would end in justly disastrous failure.

An international team match between England and Scotland has been much talked of for a number of years. Advantage was taken of the gathering of amateur golfers for their championship contest at Hoylake in May to make a beginning with what promises to be an annual event. The contestants, numbering ten a-side, were as representative of the two countries as the circumstances would permit. Previous to the match considerable controversy was

carried on in the press as to the method of scoring which ought to be adopted. Some persons argued that the established—the classical—method should be followed. A golf match is a golf match, they contended, and a man has won when he is more holes up than the number of holes remaining. Others argued for the more modern method of finishing the two rounds and reckoning by the excess of holes won. The discussion, however, was largely academic. The Scottish players won by seven holes on the two rounds, and if the reckoning had been by matches they would still have won, as it happened, by a majority of two. It seems reasonable to suppose that players of the calibre requisite for a national contest can play as well under one set of conditions as another, provided they are equally fair for both sides. There is nothing in the fact that the reckoning is to be by holes in two completed rounds which ought to affect their game. Further, the calibre of the players in such a contest ought to ensure that no great disparity should arise between the number of holes and the number of matches won. But even if, by one of those freaks of luck and form which do occasionally occur, it did happen that one side were to lose by the utter failure of one player, there is really nothing to be said. The player knew the conditions, he failed, and dragged his side with him: that happens every day in other games,—why not in golf? Alter the conditions of any contest and

you can vary the results indefinitely. In the match in question one Scottish player lost 9 holes on the 36. "Ah," the Scottish team may be imagined as saying, "if he hadn't!" But one of the Englishmen lost by 9 holes, and it is easy to hear the English team making a similar observation, while the goddess of luck laughs heartily at both. Golf is not agriculture, said somebody; so also, golf is not algebra. In the matter of international golf, however, there can be no absolute trial of strength without the inclusion of the professionals. Whether they would play for no other reward than the honour of their country, after bare expenses paid, is another matter. If they would not, then it were best to let the national struggle rest with the amateurs. But of the amateurs who played at Hoylake there were only three men on each side who would have a chance of halving with a first-class professional.

We shall soon have to reckon as seriously with American golf as we have to do now with Australian cricket. In their games the Americans are a decidedly imitative people. Perhaps they are distinctively an imitative people in everything, but that is not to the purpose here. Suffice it at present to point out that in the matter of outdoor pastimes they have hitherto been content to depend largely on the initiative of this country. Whatever comes to them from the old land carries with it the certainty of popular approval. Their lawn-tennis champions

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can run ours close, and for all that is known to the contrary the Americans might beat our chosen at ping-pong. The prophecies that golf would prove but a passing madness have been falsified in the United States as on this side. It arrived to stay, having captured the right sort of people. Not only is it staying, but it is rooting itself in society. Golf has become the class game of the great Democracy. To play golf in America means that you can afford to do so, and that is something. Golf is no poor man's game in the United States. They do not stand any nonsense about one golfer being as good as another. The distinction between an amateur and a professional is defined and enforced with a strictness which, if applied in this country, would produce some wonderful changes of status. An American golfer who accepted a "present" of clubs or balls from a firm of makers with the covert intention of inducing others to purchase similar clubs or balls would, if the fact were revealed, speedily find himself ostracised in golf circles, and perhaps flatly and publicly be declared a professional. If the Americans had to do with English cricket or football they would make short work of the "expenses-paid" amateur. Reasoning on a dollar-basis is ever so much easier and more logical than on a basis of manners. But in the matter of skill, which, after all, is the main thing to consider at present, the Americans have not yet

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come up to our standard. We may be sure, however, that a people who have an ambition, and make it a serious business to excel in everything, will, sooner or later, turn out players competent to challenge our best. In this respect the American woman has outstripped the American man. North Berwick has been visited by more than one lady from the other side, with golfing abilities quite up to the highest feminine standard. But women's golf is a kind by itself. If golf were all putting, women would be easily champions. A well-known professional, after watching the play on the putting-greens at the Ladies' Championship at Deal, made the remark that if any of the men who are always in the running for the Open Championship could hole out with the consistent certainty shown by women, he would gain and hold the title with ease. The gap, however, which separates the women's game from the men's is unbridgeable; but the relative rapidity with which the American women have come to the front suggests that if ever the men are challenged by women, the challenge will come from the United States. Meantime let us enjoy our male supremacy while we have it, for who can say how long it will be ours? The Americans have gone about the acquisition of the game in the shortest and most effective way,—the way which recommended itself to English clubs and by which English golf has profited so much and so quickly.

They have imported Scottish players. Indeed they have bettered the English example. For whereas the English clubs took into their employ professional golfers, many of whom were equally bad exemplars of golf and the Scottish character, the Americans have tempted to their country as professionals a goodly number of young Scots artisans who were skilful amateurs at home. The fruit of this transplanting will soon be ripe, and the Scoto-American swing will be a thing worth living to see.

It was not to be expected that American curiosity and inventiveness would rest content with the clubs and balls recognised in the old country, if there was room for improvement. In regard to the clubs, they have not so far been able to effect any change for the better. Periodically an article crops up in the press devoted to praise of the superior "finish" of American-made clubs compared with our own. But it is merely a trade puff. The finish of the best clubs made by the best makers in Scotland is still unsurpassed, and if the finish of bad clubs is inferior, so much the better, for it makes them the more easily detected. Considering the enormous amount of attention devoted to golf-clubs over a course of centuries in this country, and the steady output of "patents" during the past ten years, it did not seem as if there was much room for genuine improvements, although the field is always open for "fads." Rumours from

America have reached this side of an impending "revolution" in wooden driving clubs, the distinctive feature being a metal striking-face. But unless it has about it something more distinctive than what rumour gives forth, it will come under the head of old notions reinvented. Any of our old-established clubmakers can tell with what frequency discarded ideas of the past turn up again as fresh discoveries. They can describe quite humorously the man who walks in confidently with a driver head containing a spring, or possessing a steel face, or having a brass plate set in like the ordinary piece of leather. This last was a favourite idea of the late Professor Tait's. The brass plate was to be grooved longitudinally so as to communicate an underspin to the ball. The theory seemed correct enough, but the most obvious effect produced was the stripping of the paint from the ball. A celluloid face has also been seen, and a gutta-percha face; and a club with a head entirely composed of gutta-percha can still be bought.

Much disappointment and fruitless pains would have been saved to golf-inventors if, early in the history of the game, a cemetery had been opened for the decent burial of deceased ideas, particularly if it had been made a condition that the headstone should bear a graven figure and description of the defunct. Wandering through the shady groves we should happen upon the last resting-place of the octagonal cane-

shaft, the steel-tube shaft, the solid steel-rod shaft, the box-spring head, the hornless driver, the heelless driver, the toeless driver—poor chap! he had his toe cut off square, so that he might be set exactly parallel to the (intended) line of drive. There also we might expect to find the hollow-faced mashie, the adjustable-headed iron, with a ratchet wheel in the socket graduated from 1 to 4, according to the degree of "loft" required. In the special corner of that silent acre which would be allotted to putters, what memories would meet us, from the croquet-mallet putter to the—well, the one that died in early infancy the other week, almost before it was christened. How populous would be the iron plot, with its lofters that were to spin the ball infallibly high in the air, and knobby-heads, with all the weight behind the shot, if only you could catch the ball just in front of the knob! Many more wonderful clubs than can be ever named without much research would lie there in well-deserved if not well-earned oblivion.

A visit to such a burial-place as we have here imagined would undoubtedly establish one very startling fact, namely, that the real living golf-clubs, the clubs actually and most efficaciously used to-day, have not essentially changed from the earliest, of which specimens remain. To the eye the difference between the old and the most recent seems considerable. It is the difference between a long, thin, spoon-like head, and a short, thick, hammer-like head. That

difference, however, is merely the result of differences in the balls—gutta-percha for leather stuffed with feathers; and in courses—wide open lawns for narrow whin-bordered avenues. The iron heads also are shorter, and all clubs alike are lighter. It would be, no doubt, a dreadful heresy to suggest that we are not much wiser than our forefathers, nevertheless it is quite evident that our share of the game of golf, as we now play it, is a very small one, say, perhaps, one-tenth; the rest is theirs. The changes we have made are due to the invention of the gutta-percha ball, and the simplification of courses. In their essence these modifications are not great; the clubs and the game remain essentially the same. But once again we seem to be on the eve of a fresh development in the play of the game, and the cause is, as before, an enlargement of the capacities of balls. And the new balls are American. This time the American inventor has decidedly scored. That statement may seem like pronouncing the verdict first and considering the evidence afterwards. But there is really no conflict of evidence. Opposed to the new balls is a mass of prejudice, much of it founded on genuine and even generous sentiment. But it will no more prevail to stop the adoption of the new principle in these American balls than it availed against the gutta-percha ball when it came to slay the old feather-filled ball.

Strangely enough, or perhaps naturally enough, the principle

of construction in the American balls is an old one, combined with a new one. The old one is the use of a distinct core, the new one the introduction of separate layers of material, gutta-percha and india-rubber alternately. The "Haskell" ball consists of a solid core of gutta-percha, then an enveloping section of string-elastic wound on under tension, and finally an outer envelope of gutta-percha about an eighth to three-sixteenths of an inch thick. The "Kempshall" ball has several layers; a sectional drawing of it looks like an anatomical diagram. Not for us to discuss the relative merits or qualities of these two productions; let them fight it out. But it seems as clear as practical trial and common-sense can make it that there is room for enormous improvement in the cored or layered golf-ball. There need be as little doubt that the new ball, in one form or another, has come to stay, and its effect on the game is the real point of interest. The money reward in business for a really durable, trustworthy ball is so great that no long time can elapse before one or other of the myriad minds now at work on the problem will produce a satisfactory ball. A cored golf-ball is by no means a new idea, neither is a rubber ball. We have had balls with wooden cores and cork cores, and balls with a cross piece of lead in them. They had their day and seem to have ceased to be. The famous "putty" ball was made of rubber mixed

with some substance to give it stability. While not the equal of these in durability, the American ball has the advantage of "carrying" farther—its flight through the air is longer. This longer flight is more marked off an iron than a wooden club. We should say, after much observation, that, compared with the solid gutta-percha ball, the American ball off an iron covers one-third more distance. Naturally such a ball presents many peculiarities of behaviour according as it is struck, and, quite naturally also, these peculiarities were treated at first as disadvantages. The professional golfers scoffed at it, and denounced its behaviour as bad. They said it was untrustworthy in approaching and villainous in putting, merely because in approaching and putting it did not follow the course nor produce the same results as a solid gutta-percha ball with the same method of play or force of stroke. In all likelihood the gutta-percha ball was denounced for flying farther than the feather ball, and the ruin of the game of golf prophesied to follow on its use. Now, as with the question of gutta-percha against feathers, so with that of the cored ball against gutta-percha—the best test is experience, and the best experience is afforded by the best players. Accordingly we find that although Alec Herd won the championship with 307 strokes, playing the Haskell ball, Braid, last year's champion, and Harry Vardon each took but one stroke more

playing with the gutta-percha ball. If Herd were a second-rate player, or a player notably inferior to Vardon or Braid, his victory might be ascribed to the ball. But, as a matter of fact, Herd's record in the championship contests is a very fine one. On more than one occasion he has seemed to have the championship within his grasp, and his failures are probably to be ascribed to temperament. Now the Haskell ball does not give nerve, as was clearly proved by Herd's play at the ninth and eleventh holes in his last round at Hoylake. It was weak in the extreme, and it seemed that he was about to break down as he had done before. Two things, therefore, seem to be established,—first, that the Haskell ball in the hands of champions is one stroke better in 308; and second, that a man can fizzle, and duff, and top, and slice, and pull with a Haskell ball, just as he can with a gutta-percha ball.

There is the further consideration often urged that it gives an unfair advantage to the weaker player, or, in other words, that the stronger player does not get the same relative benefit from the ball as does the weaker. Observation goes to show that there is some truth in this, even if it seems to contradict the deduction from the championship results, that the Haskell ball is better than the gutta-percha by 1 stroke in 308. The good or fair amateur golfer is not to be measured by champions' play, which represents an approach to the only

possible perfection. The cored ball does not enable the erring amateur to drive straighter nor to hit cleaner. But it does several things for him that make the game easier. It goes farther when he does hit it clean; it brings difficult iron carries within his reach; it rises more quickly off the club-face out of bad lies and bunkers; it suits the pitch and run approach better, and—we utter this opinion deliberately—it puts far better. The way of putting with it has to be discovered or learned. But once acquired—and the secret seems to lie in Willie Park's method of drawing the putter face up and forward as you strike—the result is more satisfactory than that which the gutta ball gives. The Haskell ball keeps the line more truly on a straight put, appearing to jump little irregularities which the gutta ball hugs; and its behaviour on a curve is beautiful to see, as it runs it out, like an engine slowing down gradually into a station, instead of pulling up quickly as does the gutta ball.

But enough of theoretics. It seems certain that the cored ball will soon be improved, so that its parts are more compactly knit together: at present the outer gutta-percha rind splits even under good play, and cuts to pieces under topping. It is abundantly clear that men who have found the game made easier—in the sense of being less violent—by the cored ball will never again use the gutta ball. Each day yields fresh evidence that the animosity and prejudice of the pro-

fessionals against the cored ball is breaking down, seeing that an increasing number of them use it. Against these facts even the club legislation demanded by some against the cored ball would not prevail. As for the claim that all our golf-courses must be enlarged, it may be sufficient to remark that St Andrews has seen the feather ball pass away and the solid gutta ball come in and the course for length remains unchanged, and in other respects—with which balls have nothing to do—has become easier. Yet, in spite of all this, has anybody broken the gutta ball record there with a Haskell ball? The next Championship meeting at St Andrews will be highly interesting, and we dare wager that there will be more cored than solid balls used on that occasion.

Meanwhile, will the Rules of Golf Committee kindly instruct the world what should be done when a Haskell ball bursts apart under a stroke and the core rolls out? Should the core be played, or the bigger portion of the rind? The committee of a certain club in England have ruled that the cored American ball shall not be used in competitions. Will the Royal and Ancient Committee follow suit? We trow not. For it has to be remembered that the Haskell ball has made the game of golf more amusing, and in these days that is something. The old two-ball foursome has yielded some of its popularity to the comparatively new four-ball foursome. The change is

largely due to the Haskell ball. The responsibility of cutting-up another man's Haskell is too great to be faced. Almost by right the owner of a lost Haskell demands that the whole party of eight—four players and four caddies—shall aid in searching for it, and the statutory five minutes' rule is no longer in force. "We have been ten minutes at this," said one golfer to another who was out of sight, on hands and knees, in a bush looking for his Haskell. "Oh, curse the hole!" was the reply, "I want to find my ball." Could golf unreason go further? Another person watching the Haskell ball holing itself out in the hands of a dexterous opponent, declared that it was a thinking ball. "I can see it reflecting," he said. Certain it is that on a particular course where a keeper's cottage forms an obstacle between the hole and a sliced drive, one of those cored balls was topped into the doorway, ran up some steps, and came out at the window. What is the use of despising a ball which can do that?

It is urged as a serious matter against the new balls that they are expensive. Certainly the fluctuations in the selling-price within the past three months have conjured up ideas of a mining-share rather than a golf-ball. Haskell balls were for weeks quoted in the Stock Exchange at prices which suggested that they yielded many pennyweights to the ounce. They became so scarce and valuable that the possessors could not bring themselves to

play with the few they had. Indeed it seemed likely that Haskell balls would pass into cabinets and museums beside Great Auk eggs and Peruvian mummies. The highest society appeared to open its doors to the man who had a Haskell ball, and he who had three was liable to be waylaid and robbed. In due time came the glad news that a fresh consignment was on the way from the United States. One wealthy golfer, it is said, chartered a steam-yacht to intercept the ocean steamer that carried them, and attempted to bribe the mate to deliver to him the packages. That may be a fable, but certain it is that when they did arrive they were double the price at which they were sold when first introduced into this country. For the meaning of all this we have merely to fall back on the reflection that the ways of the American businessman are not as ours. Further, if half-a-crown seems an exorbitant price to pay for a golf-ball, the only possible remedy is not to pay it. There are golfers to-day who fold their arms proudly and say sternly, "No; I am a gutta man." But when the time comes, and it will come soon, in which the cored ball, greatly improved, will be made on this side, at, say, eighteen-pence or two shillings, then, and only then, will the American ball be had at a similar price. That is business and human nature, in America as elsewhere. But, if that time never comes, let not the frugal golfer despair. There are other possibilities in the way of balls besides cores

and rubber layers. Imagine a golf-ball with an internal circular tube containing ball-bearings. The mind may stagger at the idea, but, in sober fact, it is fully set forth in the patent specification. What these ball-bearings do we cannot say, but they make the Haskell and Kempshall things seem old-fashioned already.

But, recurring to the question of expense, the cost of the new balls is a serious consideration for playing professionals. Clearly, if they earn half-a-crown for a round of the green and use up a half-crown ball in playing it, they might as well stay at home. We heard urged with great conviction the other day the opinion that it was a pity golf should become an expensive game. To which answer was made that such was the very best thing that could happen. The latter opinion undoubtedly represents the tendency of golf—of club-golf, that is—to-day. The present writer considers the question as not worth arguing on these grounds, because concerted action towards such an end is impossible, and in Scotland at

least no power of purse or class can ever close to the public the free or lightly charged links, or divorce the artisan and the man of moderate means from the game. The Haskell ball or the Kempshall ball have not even begun to do so. Moreover, the spirit of the times is against the probability of any such question of expense arising. A good feather-stuffed ball in the old days cost five shillings. The gutta-percha ball at one shilling took its place, being a better ball. In due time we shall have the core ball for a shilling, and if a ball warranted to carry 250 yards and costing a guinea were to be invented to-morrow, in due time we should have it or something better for a shilling also. That is the spirit of the times. The Americans have undoubtedly produced a ball which bids fair to oust the solid gutta-percha one. Like everything new, and while new efficacious, it has raised a great deal of unreasoning animosity and prejudice. But nobody has ever been heard to assert that the new ball has reduced in the least the amount of skill required to play the game of golf.

ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.

IX. TO A NEW COVERT!

THE cyclists of the Mount Nelson Light Horse trundled out of camp with some show of bravery. They had left Cape Town 100 strong. The journey from Hanover Road to Britstown had reduced their numbers by fifty per cent. The bare fifty still with the brigade were the survival of the fittest after a week of rain at Hanover and another week of struggling with Karoo tracks ankle-deep in dust. But the men tried to show something of a front as they pedalled out of camp. Their captain was an enthusiast; he had won more "pots" on the cycle-track than usually falls to the lot of professional pedallers. But he had but poor material into which to infuse his enthusiasm; and at any time South African roads are as demoralising to wheelmen used to a macadamised surface as the bouldered bed of a stream would be to a traction-engine. But these were the same men who had scorched up to the Picquetberg Passes when ten men and a boy threatened Cape Town with invasion; and the memory of the wave of military enthusiasm which convulsed the great seaport from Greenpoint to Simon's Town was still worth something to these over-weighted heroes struggling with the Karoo.

"You may not think it," said the brigadier, as he wrestled with the mutton, which is the

staple food of the veldt breakfast-table, "but I am anxious about those fellows—d—d anxious. But it is no use having cyclists if they are only to loaf about in camp. I use them much in the same spirit as an inexperienced pyramid player breaks up the balls at the beginning of a game. I trust that out of the crowd just one may get home. The captain is a hearty fellow, and will probably make his way into Strydenburg; but he is about the only one that it would be worth betting upon. I should be sorry to lose him, as I like enthusiasts; but as for his gang, I would willingly present the lot to "brother." I had some cyclists down Calvinia way. I found that on a down gradient they were terrors, but when any climbing came their way they afforded "brother" any amount of fun. The cyclist, to be any use in war, must have roads and luck; otherwise, as scout or messenger, he is valueless. It is all very well for faddists to prophesy a future for them. I like to see them working out their own salvation: pictures of dismounted cyclists behind stacks of bicycles prepared to receive cavalry fill me with delight. I like to anticipate the glee of the cavalry which has forced them to dismount for action at some disadvantageous spot, and then, while they are doubling up their machines as a *chevaux de frise*,

shoots them from the cover of a haystack at a thousand yards."

Brigade Major. "But surely, sir, there must be some use in cycles for military purposes. The French, for instance, use them almost exclusively for carrying messages in their manoeuvres!"

Brigadier. "True for you. But then in France they have roads. But even with the best of roads there is a limit to their utility. Behind an army they are excellent; in front of an army their value is problematical. Even down in Calvinia, where Burghers were scarce and main roads fair, they rarely carried a message as safely and as quickly as a mounted Kaffir. They are vulnerable all round from other causes than the hazards of war. Machine vulnerable, man vulnerable, and in a country like this, where the roads are not masked by hedgerows, they furnish a kind of "running-deer" to every Burgher observation-post, and, as far as I can judge, an observation-post is to be found on every kopje!" . . .

It will be seen from the above that the brigadier had no intention of undertaking the wild-goose chase which had been proposed to him. The missive which he had sent to Strydenburg had been cunningly constructed. It ran: "Local information indicates that the invaders have doubled back to the north, evidently with the object of recrossing the Orange River. I am moving with all reasonable despatch upon Hoptown. I was in touch with

scattered parties of enemy last night. Have just sufficient supplies to take me into Hoptown." The message was addressed to Chief, Pretoria, and repeated to the lieutenant-general commanding the operations to suppress the invasion. Knowing that the cyclists might draw blank at Strydenburg, a second copy of the message was sent by the hand of a Kaffir, to be delivered at the telegraph office in Britstown. As events turned out it was the cyclists' telegram which went and, as intended, upset the apple-cart which the general subsequently tried to drive over the brigadier's prostrate form. In the strict letter of the military law which, in so many cases, subordinates individual initiative and sound judgment, the action taken by the brigadier was indefensible. But as a matter of fact the mutiny was not so terrible as it at first appears. Setting aside the common-sense issue which ought to guide officers in senior commands when accepting orders from a superior, it should be remembered that the brigadier had only been directed to co-operate with the officer who had now taken unto himself the position of supreme command. Lord Kitchener himself, at the meeting on the De Aar platform, had given him a roving commission, to be controlled only by orders from Pretoria and the lieutenant-general at De Aar. Consequently he resented his free action being clogged by a senior whose only object seemed to be a desire to hug him and his force as closely as possible for protection

against imaginary dangers. The brigadier, who was mentally as capable a soldier as any in South Africa, had not spent eighteen months in following, or being followed by, Boers, without arriving at a very shrewd estimate of their tactics. The lore of the chase in which he was engaged, as he read it, pointed to a break back upon the Orange River on the part of the main body of the invaders; and having balanced his conception of the situation with his conscience, he considered that the most serviceable move he could make was to place himself and his brigade upon the railway at Hopetown. And so having sent the cyclists to smell out the land of Strydenburg, the New Cavalry Brigade, working in three parallel columns, fringed round the east end of the Beer Vlei and struck north-east, with the backs of its rear-guard turned on the Karoo for ever.

"How about Zwingspan?" queried the brigade major, remembering the written instructions in the general's missive.

"Let it rip," was the laconic reply from the brigadier. "With this crowd of Vermaas's hanging about I am not going to risk patrols other than cyclists, and I am certainly not going to push on in force!" This was final, and the extended front of the brigade opened out across the veldt, throwing out its feelers like the tentacles of some slowly crawling monster. Through highland and lowland it wound, rummaging the isolated farmsteads, ploughing through ravine and mealie patch. But though wild-fowl

rose chattering, and, scolding bitterly, circled round the scouts, though springbok trotted leisurely away from the front of each several column, though sullen girls and gaping Kaffirs peered from beneath the eaves of farmsteads, no sign of hostility was to be found in all this life. It was the same old monotonous drudgery of the veldt again. The same merciless sun, the same sapless and parched surroundings. As the day wore on men longed for the crack of a rifle to ease the burden of the monotony. The country, too, grew more hilly, and fearing that he might be attacked in detail, the brigadier reduced his front, till by four in the afternoon the brigade to all practical purposes had concentrated. Then it was that the advance-guard struck a great white road, ankle-deep in dust. This veldt track was so rigid in its alignment, that for the moment it might have been taken for a turnpike road fallen upon decadent days. But the local colour of its surroundings did not support the comparison, and the reason of its being loomed up gauntly in the middle distance. A great square of whitewashed building, which, strange to relate, was overshadowed by quite a number of trees, giving it an appearance not unlike the first attempt which a Bengali merchant makes at a country residence, when success in commerce renders it imperative that he should improve the circumstances of his dwelling. But though in the first instance the general appearance

of the farm was forbidding, yet, on examination, it presented several qualities which are valuable to the soldier. An infant *barrage* closing the drainage slope in a depression formed an artificial water-pan of no mean dimensions. A pair of zinc-fanned windmills worked two artesian wells with such success that the purest drinking-water abounded; and the result of all this moisture was the nearest attempt at a lawn that any single man in the brigade had seen in the length and breadth of South Africa outside Cape Town and its suburbs. A great stack of forage added to the locality's military assets, and the brigadier just looked at the water and the lawn, and said, "A land flowing with milk and honey,—this is where I shall camp. I could not resist camping in such a spot even if I had old man De Wet dead beat a furlong from home!" And it was indeed an entrancing spot to the Karoo-worn warrior. Just one of those delightful oases which do exist, but which do not abound in Cape Colony. Upon them stand the best and oldest farms, for when the forebears of the present owners first struck them, they had no need to go farther afield in search for a desirable anchorage. If more of these enviable spots had abounded, even the barbarity of British rule would not have driven the *voortrekkers* into wholesale emigration across the soapy waters of the Orange River.

After the usual worries of settling into camp — mule-

drivers leading animals to water in the drinking reservation, commanding officers making themselves disagreeable—there was time to turn one's attention to the inmates of the roadside mansion. The great whitewashed bungalow seemed to be alive with inhabitants. The Intelligence officer went about his business with the air of an expert, and in two minutes the head of the house, a fine old specimen of the patriarchal Boer, and his son, a cadaverous slip of a man, were standing before him, hat in hand, while women-folk of all ages and fulness of costume peeped from every convenient crevice in the background. The general attitude of the household was that of humility, in contrast to the usual reception which the column had experienced in the majority of Karoo farms. And presently the cause for the deference became apparent. The gaping children in the main entrance were thrust aside, and a woman of magnificent proportions pushed in between the two humble men. The old man mumbled something about his daughter-in-law, while his callow son if possible looked more sheepish than at first. The Intelligence officer for his part could hardly keep his countenance. The lady had donned her best. Her ample form was swathed in the rustling folds of a magnificent silk gown which had evidently been cut in the days of the crinoline attachment. Her hair, showing signs of the rapidity with which its present gloss had been applied, was knotted

somewhere adjacent to the neck; and not satisfied with nature's adornment, this pre-historic beauty had fixed a great white ostrich feather in her well greased tresses, which drooped down upon her neck and shoulder. The Intelligence officer bowed deeply in order to keep his feelings in due subordination. The lady was not slow to introduce herself. Dropping one armful of a skirt that was so voluminous that it had to be held in both hands, she limply took the officer's hand.

Frau. "Good morning. I am Mrs Van Herden; this is my man¹ (*indicating the meek son of the house*). We are glad to see you. Will you have some coffee?" (And as she spoke a microscopic Kaffir maid appeared with the inevitable coffee on a tray.)

Intelligence Officer. "Thank you, madam, but I must first search the house and out-houses."

F. "You are welcome to do that. We are perfectly loyal. Have you not heard what the Van Herdens did in the Kaffir wars, and my grandfather was Scotch."

I. O. "It is only a matter of form, madam. Any one could see that you were perfectly loyal!"

F. "Are you a general, mister?"

I. O. No; I ought to be if I had my deserts; but I am the next best thing. I'm the general's secretary." (There-upon the old man grunted approval, while the chorus of

gaping maids nodded an endorsement behind him.)

F. "Can I see the general, Mister Secretary?"

I. O. "That depends upon the information which you give me now. Why do you wish to see him?"

F. "My children have never seen an English general; besides, this is the first time that the English have ever been to the house; we should like to cook a dinner for the English general!"

I. O. "But your children have seen Burgher generals?"

F. "Oh, yes; they are nothing. We had Commandant Brand here yesterday!"

I. O. "When did he leave?"

F. "Early this morning!"

I. O. "Which way did he go?"

F. "He went out on the veldt; they took the Strydenburg road. But they were Free Staters; you cannot say where they were going. They would tell us Strydenburg, and then go somewhere else. You see, they knew that you were close!"

I. O. "How many men had he with them?"

F. "Only a few. It was a small horse commando, perhaps twenty. All Free Staters!"

The old patriarch, who had been fumbling in his pocket, now produced a slip of paper which he presented to the Intelligence officer. The writing on the paper ran as follows:—

"O.V.S. Receipt for Property
Commandeered.

"Taken from Jan Van Herden, of Melk Kraal, Cape

¹ Dutch method of describing a woman's husband.

Colony, two sacks of mealies, 500 bundles of oat forage, two mules, four sheep, for the use of O.V.S. commando.

"This receipt to be presented for repayment at the end of the war to the O.V.S. Government. (Signed)

"ADRIAN FISCHER,
Corporal, O.V.S. Forces.

Dated "*February* —."

I. O. "Who is Fischer?"

F. "He is Brand's adjutant!"

I. O. "I thought that you said there were only about twenty in the commando. They and their horses must have been hungry to eat four sheep and 500 bundles of oat hay. I should say that there must have been more like fifty of them!"

F. "That may be, we did not count them. But can we ask the general to dinner?"

I. O. "That depends. First, I must go through your rooms."

Followed by the whole family, the Intelligence officer passed through to the various rooms, furnished and upholstered in the stereotyped Dutch fashion, till they came to the end of the long house. Here a closed door barred their way.

I. O. "What is in there?"

F. "Nothing—it is only my daughter and her 'man'; they have only been married a few days, so we let them live apart. (*Throwing the door open.*) You may go in, of course. We are jingoes, we have nothing to conceal."

The Intelligence officer entered the room to find an overbearded young man and a very

touzled, plump young lady sitting sheepishly hand-in-hand. They rose as he entered and stared vacantly at him. The man was a mean specimen of the Dutchman, tall and thin, narrow chest, and sloping shoulders. An aggressive red beard for one so young, growing backwards after the fashion prevailing with the Sikhs. A cadaverous wretched creature, yet doubtless with strength enough in his forefinger to make the seven-pound pull of a rifle.

The Intelligence officer's eyes ranged the room, which was bare enough to have satisfied the most ascetic of honeymooning couples. Half a glance was sufficient to prove to him that the frau had been speaking the truth, so he turned upon the pair and shot at the man a question so sharply that he started, "Do you know the road to Zwingelspan?" The man recovered himself slowly, and then affected that look of imbecility which is invariably the Dutchman's effort at self-protection when he is cornered by a question which he does not wish to answer. But his new-found mother-in-law was evidently anxious that nothing should occur to irritate the Intelligence officer, for she blandly answered his question herself. "Of course he knows the way to Zwingelspan. Why, he lives there himself!"

I. O. "Then he is the very man I want. (*To the man*) You must come along with me over to my cart and wait there in case the general wants a guide to Zwingelspan between this and midnight."

A complete silence overtook the whole group after the Intelligence officer had delivered himself of this speech. It seemed as if he had inadvertently upset some plan. But the only thing the Intelligence officer noticed at the moment was that the pale face of the bride, as she stood limply in front of him, grew a shade paler, and that her great blue eyes filled with tears, which poised a moment on her eyelashes and then trickled down her cheeks. If, as the Intelligence officer was only too ready to surmise, he had upset an elaborate ruse to shield one of Brand's special envoys, then the girl was an accomplished actress; but if, as possibly was the case, she was moved to weeping in anticipation of peril to her husband or lover, then she had adopted a course most likely to serve her purpose with the man about to place himself between her and the man she loved. There are few British officers who can persevere in a distasteful task in face of the reproach furnished by a silent weeping woman.

I. O. (softening the authoritative tone in his speech) "You need not be distressed. I promise you we will not take him farther than Zwingelspan, even if we take him there at all."

Weeping Bride. "If you take him, how shall I ever know what you will do with him? You say here that you are going to Zwingelspan; but we know that you are not going there. You would not tell us if you were. Besides, the British were at Zwingelspan this morn-

ing, and you are following the Boers."

F. "Oh leave her, Mr Secretary, she is only a child, and she loves her 'man.' She is afraid that you will take him, and that the Boers will catch him with you and treat him as a traitor!"

The Intelligence officer led the man out to hand him over to the Tiger, when the latter returned from "nosing" round the outhouses. Though perplexed in his mind as to the real attitude of the inmates of the farm, yet he had elicited something, namely, that information would be sent to the nearest armed Burghers that the column was not bound for Zwingelspan, and that a British force had been at Zwingelspan that morning. The latter was important, since the only force which could have been at the pan was the main force, which meant that the general had been up to time in his advance on Strydenburg, while the New Cavalry Brigade had failed in the tryst.

The brigadier's comments on the intelligence surmises were short and quaint. "Quite so. But I am not here to sweep up De Wet's red-herrings. The old man will probably strike half-a-dozen of Brand's or Vermaas's men when he reaches Strydenburg, if my cyclists haven't turned them out. We, crossing the old man's trail to-night in our journey north, may strike something big. Anyway, we will have the satisfaction of knowing that we are playing the game every time. And that being the case we will let the old fat frau cook us a dinner to-night!" The briga-

dier, who had estimated De Wet's movements with consummate foresight, did not of course know that the replenished Plumer had picked up the guerilla's back trail from Strydenburg, and was, at the moment that the New Cavalry Brigade was bivouacking, practically running him in view. . . .

It was, all considered, a very creditable repast which the good lady of Melk Kraal prepared for the brigadier and his staff. But on occasions such as this it is the custom of the hosts to sit round the walls of the dining-hall, while the honoured guests feed alone at a table in the centre. In this case the ladies and children of the household lined the walls, taking an active interest in the serving, which was at the hands of a couple of Kaffir girls. There were no courses. The whole of the dinner was put upon the table at once, and it consisted of boiled mutton hacked into hunks and swimming in a greasy slop; fowls so boiled that the flesh had lost its resistance and become a mere pulp; a mess of ochre-coloured boiled pumpkin, boiled mealie¹ cobs, and boiled coffee of the consistency of treacle. In fact, everything boiled and boiled to death. A repast truly characteristic of the Dutch, who are most carnivorous in their choice of food, and far too feckless and lazy to spend time and trouble over such a common function as eating. It was the meal of a people devoid of imagination and artistic taste. None the less it was the best that the

house could produce; and as the guests had taken the precaution to bring their own liquor, it was a change from the tinned delicacies of the modern active service meal. The banquet closed with a quaint incident. The Intelligence officer had brought in his pocket a bottle of *crème-de-menthe*. The hosts were invited to drink from the brandy-bottle, which they did with the relish of experts in the art of neat spirit drinking. To the hostesses was shown the consideration due to their sex, and they were offered the green concoction of peppermint from the *crème-de-menthe* bottle. There is little of that coyness in the Dutch composition which is met with in the civilisation of the West: each lady of the household received her glass demurely and tossed off the contents, pouring it, after the manner of Dutch spirit-drinkers, ungracefully far into the mouth. The old Frau smacked her lips. "But it is good," she said naïvely, and then taking the bottle from the table she poured out the whole contents into a tumbler and emptied it with one gulp down her capacious throat.

The brigadier was equal to the occasion. Raising his glass, he said, "Madam, may I be permitted to drink your health and to thank you for your hospitality." Madam smiled blandly, in no wise inconvenienced by the severity of the potion which she had absorbed! . . .

But the good-humoured revelling of the dinner-table was shortly to be changed for the

¹ Maize.

stern reality of war. The brigadier and his staff had barely bid farewell to their happy hostess and returned to their bivouac when the voice of a tired and excited man was heard calling to be directed to headquarters. It was the captain of cyclists who had started that morning before daybreak for Strydenburg. The man's face was a study when, having flung himself clear of his machine, which was clanging like a *teuf-teuf*, he presented himself in the solitary tent which during halts served the headquarters of the little column as a living and sleeping apartment. In the dim light of a flickering candle, it seemed that he was swathed in a sheet, so thick and white was the crust of dust which covered him from head to foot. He staggered into the mess-tent, swayed a moment, tried to salute, and then dropped in a heap on to the camp chair offered to him.

Brigadier. "Give him some brandy."

After a long drink from the brandy-bottle the little captain of cyclists recovered sufficiently to smile at his own weakness.

Brigadier. "Well, have you been fighting—where's your crush?"

Cyclist Captain. "Fighting—there never has been such fighting in this war, it has been simply bloody!"

B. "Sanguinary, my boy; well, are you the last survivor? You rather remind me of pieces of poetry that I have read about the last man."

C. C. (dejectedly) "It has been a long, sad, and terrible

day. Harvey of Damant's is mortally wounded, and I have had a man wounded!"

B. "The devil you have. I thought at least that you must have been annihilated. Where are the rest of you, then?"

C. C. "Lost or captured, I am afraid. Seventeen were captured in succession at the top of one rise. I only got through by the skin of my teeth and the luck of there only being three Boers at the top of the hill."

B. (unconcernedly) "Horrid adventure! What luck there were not four Boers! But give me a detailed story. Have you been into Strydenburg? have you seen any of the staff of the other column?"

The following is a paraphrase of the story which was eventually elicited from the cyclist captain:—The cyclists, who broke down on the heavy roads at the rate of about four an hour, kept up a steady pace until they were some five miles from Strydenburg. Here going up a steep rise they tailed out somewhat, and seventeen were captured in rotation by three burghers ensconced in the nek over which the up gradient passed. The captain and five others all came up together, and in the scuffle he and three of his men succeeded in getting through. Later on they were fired at by Boers just outside Strydenburg, into which town they rode simultaneously with an advance-guard of Damant's Guides. The Boers, who, with the exception of the rear-guard under Vermaas, had left and gone north on the pre-

ceding day, just as the Brigadier had surmised, had destroyed the telegraph office, but the local operator, who had hidden away an instrument, by attaching the broken wire to a piece of garden fencing was able to get through to De Aar, and in half an hour the brigadier's "Clear the line" message was ticking off in Pretoria. This all happened three hours before the co-operating general entered the town. In the meantime the advance-guard of Damant's Guides, as soon as they heard that the New Cavalry Brigade was not on the road, pushed out to occupy the Tafelkop Hills outside the town. Harvey took the cyclists with him. And a very gallant little fight they had, in which three of the Guides, though sorely wounded, held up and captured the five men who had wounded them. Owing to his lust for blood it was late in the day before the cyclist captain was able to find the general. This officer had a despatch ready for him to take back to his own brigadier. The return journey had been effected without other mishap than that of extreme fatigue, which difficulty the captain alone had been able to surmount: the rest of his cyclists, if not prisoners, were spread-eagled over the veldt at such spots where death had overtaken their machines.

Now what was written in the despatch which the cyclist officer had brought is not known to the chronicler of the adventures of this brigade. But it was evidently couched in not over friendly language, for the brigadier's face worked with

annoyance as he read it. Having read it he tore it up into very small pieces and sat for a moment or two staring steadfastly at the candle.

"Anything serious, sir?"

Brigadier. "No; the old man is peevish,—says that my disobedience of his orders has caused us to lose De Wet. That he has washed his hands of me, and that it only remains to report me to a higher authority. To be philosophical, he has some grounds for his peevishness if he really believes that he has ever been nearer to De Wet than the latter gentleman desired. But you get no return in an argument with seniors—they have the whip hand of you every time; so here, ole man Baker, bring out your stilus and tablets and write out brigade orders. We march direct on Hopetown, two hours from this. Mr Intelligence, mark out a route, and mind you have a good guide. Everything on a night like this will depend on your guiding." Such is the history of a transformation scene which is of common occurrence when men make war. A camp sleeping heavily and peacefully at midnight, in a couple of hours may have disappeared, to be found sorrowfully toiling along in the dark on some venture bent. . . .

The Intelligence officer had reason to congratulate himself that he had already got his guide held by the ear by the Tiger, as it is a big undertaking to conjure up guides on notice only given an hour before midnight. The guide himself was not best pleased, and aped that

air of imbecility which on occasions similar to this is the Dutch form of passive resistance. But the Tiger took him in hand, primed him with a few simple truths and the history of some imaginary executions, so that he waxed more communicative when he found himself in the centre of the advance-guard of twelve dismounted dragoons with fixed bayonets,¹ with which the brigadier when night marching was accustomed to head his advance-guard.

There is a limit to the fascinations of a night march if you have to make many of them, especially if it is undertaken without the definite promise of a fight on the following day. Men and horses dog tired, yearning for sleep; the hundred and one irregularities which would find no place in daylight. The weary waiting that intervals may be corrected, the hitch with the advance-guard, the difficulty of loading the supply-waggons. The irritability of the chief, growing in intensity as he strikes match after match against his watch dial. Semi-mutinous resistance of orders on the part of Irregulars; lamentations from the major of the battery, whose horses have been standing hooked-in for the last half hour. How impossible it all seems,—how heartbreaking; yet everything shakes down eventually, and the great dark caterpillar, bristling with armed men like a woolly-bear, creeps forward

into the veiled uncertainty of night.

The advance-guard has moved off, the brigadier is just waiting to see the baggage fairly started, when a sudden spark gleams out from a knoll above the camp which the falling-in night picquet has just evacuated. A bullet whirrs noisily overhead. "Martini," conjectures the brigadier. "I wonder what that means!" Two minutes later another spark flashes out from the same spot, and a leaden messenger buries itself with a skirr and a thud, within ten yards of the little group of officers.

"Not bad for a chance shot—we'll see if they are going to persevere!" Swish, came a third shot singing away harmlessly overhead.

"Sniping!" said the brigadier. "I would hang that beast if I could catch him. Look here, gallop down to the officer in command of the rear-guard and tell him to send a couple of quick-witted fellows to stalk that sniper. I will give five pounds if he is brought in alive."

The messenger galloped out into the darkness, and as the last of the waggon transport turned into the right track, the staff cantered northwards in the direction of the head of the column, reckless of the solitary bullets which at intervals whistled their flight through the still night air.

Considerable tension attaches to the head of a night-march-

¹ British cavalry at this period of the campaign were armed with rifle and bayonet.

ing column, especially when moving through an unreconnoitred country. And in spite of the little text-books with smart covers, it is more often in unreconnoitred country that the soldier is called upon to operate than otherwise. Consequently the Intelligence officer forgot all about the sniping incident, and busied himself with being ready to answer the many queries of an imaginative major in command of the advance-guard. Five miles of the journey had perhaps been made, at least it was at the third halt that word was passed up that the brigadier wanted to see the Intelligence officer. The brigadier had dismounted at the head of the battery.

"Hullo, Mr Intelligence, we have got the sniper—and it would beat a very Solomon to give judgment in a like case. Strike a match."

The little flame burned up and declared to the astonished view of the Intelligence officer the face and figure of his guide's weeping bride. There was no sign of tears now. The girl stood with her hands clasped behind her back, her mouth firmly closed, and looked her captors full in the face. It was a fine figure, seen for a moment in the uncertain light of the lucifer shaded from the wind. *Cappie* blown back behind her head, ill-concealing the wealth of glistening hair, pale determined face, full of defiance, and thrown-out chest across which the leather bandolier still hung in damnable

evidence. How different to the limp and weeping woman of the afternoon. A second and the little slip of pinewood had burnt out.

Brigadier. "What do you make of it?"

Intelligence Officer. "Magnificent woman — damnable crime."

Bystander. "Magnificent she-cat!"

Prisoner. "You steal my husband, and because I would do my best to stop you, when the men were afraid to attack and offered you food instead, you call me names. Give me back my husband and let me go, or if you would shoot me, shoot and be finished with it."

Brigadier. "My dear young lady, no one will hurt you or call you names. You shall have your husband back as soon as we have finished with him. Until that time, I am afraid that you must stay with us, but you shall be properly looked after. I cannot afford to let you again be as naughty as you have been to-night. Hand her over to the supply officer,—he's acting provost-marshal, is he not? (*Then turning to his staff*) What a little vixen! That gives you a very considerable insight into the temper of these loyal Cape colonists: to think that while we were supping with this young lady's mamma she was planning a little sniping party, as a revenge against us for breaking in upon her honeymoon!" . . .

(To be continued.)

AVE VENEZIA ATQUE VALE.

To think of Venice without the Campanile of S. Mark is, to any one who has ever known her intimately, almost an impossibility. For it was not the Piazza di San Marco alone that the famous bell-tower dominated, but all Venice too, across whose silent ways that bell, rung by the watchman on the summit, by day and night, no longer sounds. So passes the glory of the world.

Begun in 902 under Doge Pietro Tribuno, it was not till 1150 under Doge Domenico Morosini that it was finished so far as the belfry, which was added under Doge Leonardo Loredan in 1510. The belfry and pyramid then added, completing the shaft, were the work of Buono: the belfry was a beautiful "open loggia of four arches in each face," and commanded a magnificent view of Venice and her islands. The whole tower, including the Angel which tipped it, was 323 feet high, while the base measured 42 feet. And now that it has fallen, a mere mass of ruin 100 feet high in the piazza, we are beginning to realise perhaps what we have lost.

For four hundred years not one of our countrymen has visited Venice without being astonished at the beauty of the Campanile. John Evelyn thus writes of it in his 'Diary' concerning his visit to Venice in 1645:—

"Having fed our eyes with the

noble prospect of the Island of St George, the galleys, gondolas, and other vessels passing to and fro, we walked under the cloister on the other side of this goodly piazza, being a most magnificent building, the design of Sansovino. Here we went into the *zecca* or mint. . . . After this we climbed up the tower of St Mark, which we might have done on horseback, as 'tis said one of the French kings did, there being no stairs or steps, but returns that take up an entire square on the arches 40 foot, broad enough for a coach. This steeple stands by itself without any church near it, and is rather a watch tower in the corner of the great piazza 230 foot in height, the foundation exceeding deep; on the top is an angel that turns with the wind, and from hence is a prospect down the Adriatic as far as Istria and the Dalmatian side, with the surprising sight of this miraculous city lying in the bosom of the sea in the shape of a lute, the numberless islands tacked together by no fewer than 450 bridges."

Mr John Evelyn seems to have made some mistake as to the height of the tower, and indeed, though as he says the foundation was exceeding deep, it was not deep enough to prevent our grief.

But the Campanile of S. Mark is not the only tower in Venice that we hold precious. In a halo of mist in early morning, sailing as it were on a sea as smooth and blue and transparent as the sky itself, rises the island of S. George, with its church and monastery and its mighty bell-tower, tipped, too, with a golden angel that looks like a tall lily, standing in the serene waters of some lake of fancy. Indeed one's

first impression almost of Venice is one of rosiness, as though some soft indefinite rosy light shone through everything there. And it is from this tower of S. Giorgio Maggiore that, as I think, the finest view of Venice is to be seen,—finer than that from the tower of S. Mark, since one is as it were really outside Venice, almost in the sea, which, tired and motionless in the heat, completely surrounds one.

The church of S. Giorgio Maggiore is the work of Palladio, and was begun in 1565. It is not long since Roman remains were discovered on the island, that was in old days called *Isola dei Cipressi*—the island of the cypresses. It would seem that there was a Benedictine monastery here so long ago as 985. The Doge Domenico Michele is buried within the Church of Palladio. It was he who brought the two granite columns from Syria, that are now, and have been since 1180, the chiefest ornament of the Piazzeta exquisitely visible from S. Giorgio: with these he also brought the body of S. Isodoro, a not less precious gift. Over his tomb are carved the words, "*Terror Graecorum hic jacet.*" The monastery, together with how many others in Italy, has been secularised, and is now used as an artillery barracks.

It is perhaps from this island that one has the finest view of the Doge's palace, a dream of splendour in the distance. And one cannot help asking oneself as one gazes on so much beauty, How long will it re-

main with us to rejoice us of the modern world?

For in spite of the fact that the fall of S. Mark's Tower came as a surprise, at least to the outer world, though it would appear those responsible for the buildings of Venice had frequently been warned by their own architect of its inevitable fall unless various repairs were undertaken, it is not so long since we were told that that side of the ducal palace from which springs the Bridge of Sighs was gradually sinking into the mud, whither, in how short a time, all Venice must surely follow!

The inevitable decay of the piles of white poplar wood driven into the mud, the dredging of the lagoon and the tide-way for the huge modern ships, the wash and swirl and hurry of the penny steamboats up and down the Grand Canal that was surely never meant for them—all have contributed towards the downfall of that majestic and lovely tower whose loss we have as yet hardly realised, whose fall has left our world by how great a thought less lovely than of old.

"The bells of San Marco," says d'Annunzio in his latest book, "gave the signal for the Angelus, and their ponderous roll dilated in long waves along the mirror of the harbour, vibrated through the masts of the ships, spread afar towards the infinite lagoon. From San Giorgio Maggiore, from San Giorgio dei Greci, from San Giorgio Degli Schiavoni, from San Giovanni in Bragora, from San Moise, from the churches of the Salute and the Rendatore and beyond, over the whole domain of the Evangelist, from the far towers of the Madonna dell'

Orto, of San Giobbe, of Sant' Andrea, bronze voices answered mingling in one great chorus, spreading over the silent company of stones and water one great dome of invisible metal, the vibrations of which seemed to reach the twinkling of the earliest stars. In the purity of evening the sacred voices gave the City of Silence a sort of immensity of grandeur. From the summit of their temples they brought anxious mankind the message sent by the immortal multitudes hidden in the darkness of deep aisles, or mysteriously troubled by the light of votive lamps; they brought to spirits worn out by the day the message of the superhuman creatures figured on the walls of secluded chapels and in the niches of inner altars, who had announced miracles and promised worlds, and all the apparitions of the consoling Beauty invoked by unassuming Prayer rose on that storm of sound, spoke in that aerial chorus, irradiated the face of the marvellous night."

That chorus has gone for ever, having lost its chiefest voice. How long will its broken song, gradually diminishing, proclaim the birth of the Son of God to this out-moded world of sea distances and lapsing tides? Glorified by her smouldering sunsets, Venice is even now a city of profound space and silence, in the midst of the sea. Even yet there are a tangle of sweet flowers and the virile branches of the vine, and many a magnificent palace and church and tower in that city of ghosts of the old-time venturers, for which, in profound patience, the sea, her husband, waits.

On first coming to her, Venice has a strange fascination for even the most Philistine tourist; nor is that first impression unenduring. It is easy to understand and to describe her ob-

vious beauty; the mystery of that limitless horizon; the voluptuous glory of sunset; the delicate and fragile splendour of dawn over her numberless islands; the blue and grey and silver in which the twilight dresses her; the music of mandolin and guitar and the voices of the gondoliers echoing among her half-deserted palaces that bear the names of princely families that have passed for ever. A sensuous, and amid all that dead and dying loveliness around, perhaps a sensual, emotion has from the first almost entire possession of the traveller; and this, as I think, is no false impression, but a profound truth, that is true enough to be obvious—perceived by the most casual passer-by.

A largesse of colour that is in itself a kind of rich music, fierce and splendid, possessed of many a dying fall, awaits all who may come to her, suggesting to them the gallop of the bugles, the triumphant assurance of the scarlet trumpets and all their insolent joy, the thunder of innumerable drums deadening thought, and the exquisite honey of violins and harps, the breathless passion of the mandolins, the balanced wisdom of violoncellos. It is in some such emotional rapture as this that one leaves her, after staying but a few weeks with her in summer time. For she seems to be filled even now with a kind of riotous joy beyond any other city in our world. But it is not thus she will appear to those who have long lived be-

side her silent ways, who have learned to know her very soul. She is not really joyful at all, but profoundly sad: her ecstasy of beauty is over, and the sunsets only gild a dying city, only glorify her last mysterious hours. For her husband, the sea, whom she wedded in her youth with a ring of gold and ruled so imperiously for many years, has robed himself just before twilight with heavenly gold and crimson, and his own white and blue: patiently he has waited these many years till she has grown tired of conquest and glory, and is ready to sink into the arms of him who has loved her from the beginning.

Ah, no, she is not joyful: she is thinking perhaps of all those years that he has waited, or of her now shattered glory, and her beauty that is almost a ruin. Is it thus she thinks, in the solitude and silence of her limitless horizon, in the mysterious loneliness of the lagoons, in the sunshine, under her wide heaven before she goes down to the depths of the sea? Still the gondolas at evening steal back from the Lido like ghosts of winged Hermes, silently into the city, as night descends from the mountains far away. Still the stars peer down from an unimaginable height and seem like great golden water-lilies on the waters of the lagoon. And everywhere and at all hours there is a kind of music, perhaps it is the weeping of the oar; perhaps the whisper of the lagoon grass through which the gondola passes, cleaving a disappearing lane as it goes;

perhaps the musical blow of the boat itself on the water, meeting the south wind coming over the sand-dunes. And at evening this music only becomes more distinct, more passionate, resolving itself into singing heard in the distance to the accompaniment of mandolin or guitar.

Under the unfathomable serenity of her sky she still draws breath at evening, but how languidly! And we, too, think of heaven, and with her just touch it perhaps during the space of one heart's beat. Maybe in the velvety dusk she is praying that her soul may be relieved of this disorderly throng of sensible things. Hers has been one of those sublime moments that have no return, and now her last lover of all those countless ones, Night, with its warm damp breath, has touched her eyelids as with a kiss, for she has turned her face to the wind, the wind that has passed over the sea. And he, her true husband—how can we doubt for a moment that he will possess her at the last, seeing the infinite persistence of the waves, the perseverance of the foam, the imperceptible furious beating of the winds, the wearing away of the rocks, and all his travail and waiting and weariness for her?

But it is at dawn, perhaps, that Venice appears to us as of old, a city of joy. In the cold glittering light of sunrise the deserted canals are fulfilled with a kind of ancient poetry and all the ardour of silence. Above, the stars are dying in

a sky almost green and rimmed with gold. Some mystery of light coming from the cave of darkness has passed over the city, and the palaces and towers and churches seem insubstantial, fairy-like, aerial, and magically new. A cold faint wind blows from the sea, and as the gondola flies towards the dawn, past the Ducal palace that seems like a house of ivory, past San Giorgio that is delicately flushed and tall like a youth almost, gradually the expanse of sea and the strength of the sea-wind dominate the city that has already faded away as a dream. The great red sails of the fishing-boats bellied by the wind, the foam under their bows, the music of the buffeting of the little waves raised by the salt sea-wind, the growing splendour of that immense horizon,—all are fulfilled with a riot of joy, a profound enthusiasm for life, conscious of itself and of nothing beside. And gradually the ear becomes aware of the thunder of waves, the joyful song of the surf, and at last the boat leaps forwards and lies panting upon the eternal waves of the great sea that has already consumed so many eternities.

But at night all is changed. Perhaps under a full moon all the domes are shining with silver, while before one, far away out over the lagoon, disappearing at last into the heaven's heart, stretches a path of pearl, along which the gondola passes slowly and gently as though the way were indeed precious. It is then, in the numberless smaller canals

and in the Grand Canal too, one may watch the city dying so slowly and understand her profound sorrow. How indifferent she is to the life that goes on around her! Neither the love-songs of the living nor the chanting of those who already look upon death as upon a dear mistress move her at all, for she is thinking of her own destiny. Far away from her thoughts now are the lust and love and glory of the world that still live in the voices and mandolines of the gondoliers. What is it to her that the Piazza di San Marco is full of men and women, that in the Salute they are singing *Compline*, for she is thinking of her husband the sea and of her destined bridal bed.

And still beautiful, still the most lovely city of our world, she will gradually, or in a moment, be lost to us, and he, her husband, will not greet her as less than a queen. All the spoils of the splendid ships, all the beauty of his prey, all that in the centuries he has stolen from us, all the sunshine he has stored in his deep indestructible caverns, he will lavish upon her, and every night he will deck her with innumerable stars. Ropes of seaweed, opalescent and rare, will sway like beautiful snakes in her hair, banners woven by the secret sway of the sea will float from the tall campanili, on her left hand shall flash the mighty ring of the fisherman, and over her heart a red and burning sun shall flame. Then in the silence of that

lucent world the sea shall make her his own at last.

But as yet those who have for too long forgotten how precious she is are striving still to keep her for our world. Signor Boni, who presides over the Technical Commission, has discovered that each pillar of the Procuratio Vecchio—the arcades to the left as one faces the Basilica—has to support no less a weight than 3500 kilos, which, it is said, is the maximum weight that it can bear. It is necessary, therefore, that the supports both of wood and metal—the former of which have been carved and cut away by the inhabitants of the houses and shops which they serve to support—should be strengthened, and that people should no longer be allowed to inflict grievous wounds on the pillars themselves. It has also been found necessary to go so far as to insist upon the removal of all articles of furniture of great weight, of statues, and indeed of everything that is very heavy, together with the archives of the insurance company. This order only serves to show how real is our danger of losing Venice altogether. Nor is this all, for on examining the Torre dell' Orologio, Signor Boni found that the whole weight of that immense fabric is borne also by the pillars, and although he seems to have assured himself of its present safety, one is hardly encouraged to believe in its ultimate and perfect soundness. The same assurance was given us not so long ago, though not by the same

man, as to the perfect safety of the Campanile that now lies shattered and dead in the Piazza. In the Ducal palace the volumes of the Saint Mark's Library, which one had thought had already more than a year ago been removed, have also been ordered to be transferred to the Zecca, now used as a Chamber of Commerce, which however adjoins the Libreria, and would, it may well be, suffer with it in the event of a sudden collapse. The statues have also been ordered to be removed. Signor Boni appears also to have supported the arches of Sansovino's Library, and to have protected the Veronese frescoes that were exposed by the fall of the Campanile. One is also glad to know that the great bell has been recovered from the ruins.

Never can we be sufficiently thankful that the tower was isolated and separate from the Cathedral. Had it been otherwise, it would not have been the tower alone that we should mourn, but San Marco also. Even as it is, how can the authorities ever excuse themselves? It would appear that time after time they had been warned, not only by their own countrymen but by foreign architects also, of the inevitable fall of their beautiful Campanile. Vendrasco, an old builder who, the 'Times' assures us, "had had a life's experience of the bricks and stones of Venice, and who had been employed in repairs in Sansovino's Loggia and on the summit of the tower itself, declared

that the Campanile would collapse if the necessary repairs, such as repointing and strengthening with iron bands, were not undertaken. Even last Monday week Rupolo, the architect who was at work in the Loggia, reported the danger, but apparently was not listened to, for nothing was attempted." After reading this, is it surprising that we are anxious for Venice herself? It would indeed be amazing that we were not, or that we were easily quieted by the assurances of the authorities. It would indeed be far better that the authorities should satisfy themselves and us that all the greater buildings, palaces and churches, in Venice are safe. The Campanile di San Marco was not the only tower in Venice that was in itself a thing of beauty. The Tower of San Giorgio Maggiore, built as it is on an island, may be perhaps in a position of greater safety than the fallen tower ever was; still the loss of it would be as great a disaster. It has become necessary to assure ourselves of the permanence not of this building or of that so much as of Venice herself, nor, if it is necessary, should she hesitate to strengthen her foundations at whatever cost. For she is unique in the world,—a possession whose loss can never be replaced, towards the safety of which every country in Europe would be glad to contribute.

Italy has perhaps wisely resolved to rebuild the Tower of S. Mark entirely by herself. And, indeed, in the face of

certain suggestions made by the American press, it is as well that she does not desire outside aid. The 'New York Herald,' for instance, says, "It would be interesting to see in how short a time Americans could run up the fallen Venetian Campanile." I venture to say that it would not be nearly so interesting as it would be distressing. For in Italy, it is not likely or probable that a city so old and famous will be deserted in a day or a year, as many so-called cities in the United States are, and have been. It is not necessary to build for immediate use, but for ever. Europe, and Italy especially, is too old to be content with any hideous feat of engineering. One might as well talk of "running up" St. Peter's at Rome as of "running up" the Campanile di San Marco. If the rebuilding of the fallen tower is undertaken, that is not the spirit, be sure, in which it will be accomplished. Nor was Venice built in the temper in which New York was "run up," but with a far older ideal.

But for how long in vain has she asked, Who will defend Beauty that has been rejected by the vulgar century, that has just passed away, the captive of gold and sensuality and ugliness? It is the crowd that has destroyed Venice, the crowd on its penny steamboats and in its cheap hotels, that travels *en masse*. No tragic or terrible thoughts can approach it from the sea, and the impregnable past, safe in the folds of the years, can never correct its en-

thusiasm. For it is ignorant alike of Beauty and Legend. Shall we ever be able to reconcile ourselves with the crowd? shall we ever be able to find anything of the old nobility, the old splendour, in it? In defending Beauty with all our might, are we engaging ourselves to do battle for a chimera? We might almost think so on looking round on life to-day. Are we deceiving ourselves? How can we ever know? Here in Venice I have seen the fishermen put out to sea in the dawn after a storm, when the air is cool with an ecstatic happiness, as though nature had expressed herself, had relieved herself of some unbearable emotion, some intolerable thought, and every now and then the

wind would sweep for a little distance over the waves, still white with hurry, almost like a sob after long crying, involuntary and full of weariness; and it has seemed to me, as I watched those sailors, unconscious of Nature's thoughts or sorrows, sailing so swiftly over the mighty and haggard face of the waters, as though in that very unconsciousness there was the actual and entire beauty of the old world that went almost with a kind of innocence about its own simple business. Perhaps after many years it is thus that the sea will recreate for some reverent New Zealander the image of Venice, another beautiful city that the world has lost.

EDWARD HUTTON.

THE END OF THE TETHER.¹

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

VIII.

FOR a while after his second's answering hoot Massy hung over the engine-room gloomily. Captain Whalley, who, by the power of five hundred pounds, had kept his command for three years, might have been suspected of never having seen that coast before. He seemed unable to put down his glasses, as though they had been glued under his contracted eyebrows. This settled frown gave to his face an air of invincible and just severity; but his raised elbow trembled slightly, and the perspiration poured from under his hat as if a second sun had suddenly blazed up at the zenith by the side of the ardent still globe already there, in whose blinding white heat the earth whirled and shone like a mote of dust.

From time to time, still holding up his glasses, he raised his other hand to wipe his streaming face. The drops rolled down his cheeks, fell like rain upon the white hairs of his beard, and brusquely, as if guided by an uncontrollable and anxious impulse, his arm reached out to the stand of the telegraph and rang the engines to stop.

The gong clanged down below. The balanced vibration of the dead-slow speed ceased

together with every sound and tremor in the ship, as if the great stillness that reigned upon the coast had stolen through her sides of iron and taken possession of her innermost recesses. The illusion of perfect immobility seemed to fall upon her from the luminous blue dome without a stain arching over a flat sea without a stir. The faint breeze she had made for herself fell, as if all at once the air had become too thick to budge; even the slight hiss of the water on her stem died out. The narrow, long hull, carrying its way without a ripple, seemed to approach the shoal water of the bar by stealth. The plunge of the lead and the mournful and mechanical cry of the lascar came at longer and longer intervals; and the men on her bridge seemed to hold their breath. The Malay at the helm looked fixedly at the compass card, the Captain and the Serang stared at the coast.

Massy had left the skylight, and, walking flat-footed, had returned softly to the very spot on the bridge he had occupied before. A slow, persistent grin kept exposed a set of big white teeth: they gleamed evenly in the shade of the awning like the key-

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board of a piano in a dusky room.

At last, pretending to talk to himself in excessive astonishment, he said not very loud—

“Stop the engines now. What next, I wonder?”

He waited, stooping from the shoulders, his head bowed, his glance oblique. Then raising his voice a shade—

“If I dared make an absurd remark I would say that you haven’t the stomach to . . .”

But a yelling spirit of excitement, like some frantic soul wandering unsuspected in the vast stillness of the coast, had seized upon the body of the lascar at the lead. The languid monotony of his sing-song changed to a swift, sharp clamour. The weight flew after a single whirr, the line whistled, splash followed splash in haste. The water had shoaled, and the man, instead of the drowsy tale of fathoms, was calling out the soundings in feet.

“Fifteen feet. Fifteen, fifteen! Fourteen, fourteen . . .”

Captain Whalley lowered the arm holding the glasses. It descended slowly as if by its own weight; no other part of his towering body stirred; and the swift cries with their eager warning note passed him by as though he had been deaf.

Massy, very still, and turning an attentive ear, had fastened his eyes upon the silvery, close-cropped back of the steady old head. The ship herself seemed to be arrested but for the gradual decrease of depth under her keel.

“Thirteen feet . . . Thirteen!

Twelve!” cried the leadsman anxiously below the bridge. And suddenly the barefooted Serang stepped away noiselessly to steal a glance over the side.

Narrow of shoulder, in a suit of faded blue cotton, an old grey felt hat rammed down on his head, with a hollow in the nape of his dark neck, and with his slender limbs, he appeared from the back no bigger than a boy of fourteen. There was a childlike impulsiveness in the curiosity with which he watched the spread of the voluminous, yellowish convolutions rolling up from below to the surface of the blue water like massive clouds driving slowly upwards on the unfathomable sky. He was not startled at the sight in the least. It was not doubt, but the certitude that the keel of the *Sofala* must be stirring the mud now, which made him peep over the side.

His peering eyes, set aslant in a face of the Chinese type, immovable, as if carved in old brown oak, had informed him long before that the ship was not headed at the bar properly. Paid off from the *Fair Maid*, together with the rest of the crew, after the completion of the sale, he had hung, in his faded blue suit and floppy grey hat, about the doors of the Harbour Office, till one day, seeing Captain Whalley coming along to get a crew for the *Sofala*, he had put himself quietly in the way, with his bare feet in the dust and an upward mute glance. The eyes of his old commander

had fallen on him favourably—it must have been an auspicious day—and in less than half an hour the white men in the “Ofiss” had written his name on a document as Serang of the fire-ship *Sofala*. Since that time he had repeatedly looked at that estuary, upon that coast, from this bridge and from this side of the bar. The record of the visual world fell through his eyes upon his unspeculating mind as on a sensitised plate through the lens of a camera. His knowledge was absolute and precise; nevertheless, had he been asked his opinion, and especially if questioned in the downright, alarming manner of white men, he would have displayed all the hesitation of ignorance. He was certain of his facts—but such a certitude counted for little against the doubt what answer would be pleasing. Fifty years ago, in a jungle village, and before he was a day old, his father (who died without ever seeing a white face) had had his nativity cast by a man of skill and wisdom in astrology, because in the arrangement of the stars may be read the last word of human destiny. His destiny had been to thrive by the favour of various white men on the sea. He had swept the decks of ships, had tended their helms, had minded their stores, and had risen at last to be a Serang, with a placid mind as incapable of penetrating the simplest motives of those he served as they themselves were incapable of detecting through the crust of the earth the secret nature of its heart, which may be fire or

may be stone. But he had no doubt whatever that the *Sofala* was out of the proper track for crossing the bar at Batu Beru.

It was a slight error. The ship could not have been more than her own length too far to the northward; and a white man at a loss for a cause (since it was impossible to suspect Captain Whalley of blundering ignorance, of want of skill, or of neglect) would have been inclined to doubt the testimony of his senses. It was some such feeling that kept Massy motionless, with his teeth laid bare by an anxious grin. Not so the Serang. He was not troubled by any intellectual mistrust of his senses. If the captain wanted to stir the mud it was well. He had known in his life white men indulge in outbreaks equally strange. He was only genuinely interested to see what would come of it. At last, apparently satisfied, he stepped back from the rail.

He had made no sound: Captain Whalley, however, seemed to have observed the movements of his Serang. Holding his head rigidly, he asked with a mere stir of his lips—

“Going ahead still, Serang?”

“Still going a little, Tuan,” answered the Malay. Then added casually, “She is over.”

The lead confirmed his words; the depth of water increased at every cast, and the soul of excitement departed suddenly from the lascar swung in the canvas belt over the *Sofala’s* side. Captain Whalley ordered the lead in, set the engines ahead without haste, and averting his

eyes from the coast directed the Serang to keep a course for the middle of the entrance.

Massy brought the palm of his hand with a loud smack against his thigh.

"You grazed on the bar. Just look astern and see if you didn't. Look at the track she left. You can see it plainly. Upon my soul, I thought you would! What made you do that? What on earth made you do that? I believe you are trying to scare me."

He talked slowly, as it were circumspectly, keeping his prominent black eyes on his captain. There was also a slight plaintive note in his rising choler, for, primarily, it was the clear sense of a wrong suffered undeservedly that made him hate the man who, for a beggarly five hundred pounds, claimed a sixth part of the profits under the three years' agreement. Whenever his resentment got the better of the awe the person of Captain Whalley inspired he would positively whimper with fury.

"You don't know what to invent to plague my life out of me. I would not have thought that a man of your sort would condescend . . ."

He paused, half hopefully, half timidly, whenever Captain Whalley made the slightest movement in the deck-chair, as though expecting to be conciliated by a soft speech or else rushed upon and hunted off the bridge.

"I am puzzled," he went on again, with the watchful unsmiling baring of his big teeth. "I don't know what to think.

I do believe you are trying to frighten me. You very nearly planted her on the bar for at least twelve hours, besides getting the engines choked with mud. Ships can't afford to lose twelve hours on a trip nowadays—as you ought to know very well, and do know very well to be sure, only . . ."

His slow volubility, the sideways craniings of his neck, the black glances out of the very corners of his eyes, left Captain Whalley unmoved. He looked at the deck with a severe frown. Massy waited for some little time, then began to threaten plaintively.

"You think you've got me bound hand and foot in that agreement. You think you can torment me in any way you please. Ah! But remember it has another six weeks to run yet. There's time for me to dismiss you before the three years are out. You will do yet something that will give me the chance to dismiss you, and make you wait a twelvemonth for your money before you can take yourself off and pull out your five hundred, and leave me without a penny to get the new boilers for her. You gloat over that idea—don't you? I do believe you sit here gloating. It's as if I had sold my soul for five hundred pounds to be everlastingly damned in the end. . . ."

He paused, without apparent exasperation, then continued evenly,—

". . . With the boilers worn out and the survey hanging over my head, Captain Whalley

— Captain Whalley, I say, what do you do with your money? You must have stacks of money somewhere—a man like you must. It stands to reason. I am not a fool, you know, Captain Whalley—partner.”

Again he paused, as though he had done for good. He passed his tongue over his lips, gave a backward glance at the *Serang* conning the ship with quiet whispers and slight signs of the hand. Up on a long flat spit of black mud the wash of her propeller sent a ripple of sportive wavelets crested with brown froth. The *Sofala* was entering the river; the trail she had stirred up over the bar was a mile astern of her now, out of sight, had disappeared utterly; and the smooth, empty sea along the coast was left behind in the glittering desolation of sunshine. On each side of her, low down, the roots of mangroves seemed, under the sombre growth of their dark leaves, to twist and turn upon themselves with the awful effort of a struggle in the semi-liquid slime; and Massy continued in his old tone, with an abrupt start, as if his speech had been ground out of him, like the tune of a music-box, by turning a handle.

“Though if anybody ever got the best of me, it is you. I don’t mind saying this. I’ve said it—there! What more can you want? Isn’t that enough for your pride, Captain Whalley. You got over me from the first. It’s all of a piece, when I look back at it. You allowed me to insert

that clause about intemperance without saying anything, only looking very sick when I made a point of it going in black on white. How could I tell what was wrong about you. There’s generally something wrong somewhere. And, lo and behold! when you come on board it turns out that you’ve been in the habit of drinking nothing but water for years and years.”

His dogmatic reproachful whine stopped. He brooded profoundly, after the manner of crafty and unintelligent men. It seemed inconceivable that Captain Whalley should not laugh at the expression of disgust that overspread the heavy, yellow countenance. But Captain Whalley never raised his eyes—sitting in his arm-chair, outraged, dignified, and motionless.

“Much good it was to me,” Massy remonstrated monotonously, “to insert a clause of dismissal for intemperance against a man who drinks nothing but water. And you looked so upset, too, when I read my draft in the lawyer’s office that morning, Captain Whalley,—you looked so crest-fallen, that I made sure I had gone home on your weak spot. A shipowner can’t be too careful as to the sort of skipper he gets. You must have been laughing at me in your sleeve all the blessed time. . . . Eh? What are you going to say?”

Captain Whalley had only shuffled his feet slightly. A dull animosity became apparent in Massy’s sideways stare.

“But recollect that there are other grounds of dismissal.

There's habitual carelessness, amounting to incompetence—there's gross and persistent neglect of duty. I am not quite as big a fool as you try to make me out to be. You have been careless of late—leaving everything to that Serang. Why! I've seen you letting that old fool of a Malay take bearings for you, as if you were too big to attend to your work yourself. And what do you call that silly touch-and-go manner in which you took the ship over the bar just now? You expect me to put up with that?"

Leaning on his elbow against the ladder abaft the bridge, Sterne, the mate, tried to hear, blinking the while from the distance at the second engineer, who had come up for a moment, and stood in the engine-room companion. He was wiping his hands unconcernedly on a bunch of cotton waste, and looking right and left at the river banks slipping astern of the *Sofala* steadily.

Massy turned full at the chair. The character of his whine became again threatening.

"Take care. I may yet dismiss you and freeze to your money for a year. I may . . ."

But before the silent, rigid immobility of the man whose money had come in the nick of time to save him from utter ruin, his voice died out in his throat.

"Not that I want you to go," he resumed after a silence, and in an absurdly insinuating tone. "I want nothing better than to be friends and renew the agree-

ment, if you will consent to find another couple of hundred to help with the new boilers, Captain Whalley. I've told you before. She must have new boilers; you know it as well as I do. Have you thought this over?"

He waited. The slender stem of the pipe with its bulky lump of a bowl at the end hung down from his thick lips. It had gone out. Suddenly he took it from between his teeth and wrung his hands slightly.

"Don't you believe me!" He thrust the pipe bowl into the pocket of his shiny black jacket. "It's like dealing with the devil," he said. "Why don't you speak? At first you were so high and mighty with me I hardly dared to creep about my own deck. Now I can't get a word from you. You don't seem to see me at all. What does it mean? Upon my soul, you terrify me with this deaf and dumb and blind man trick. What's going on in that head of yours? What are you plotting against me there so hard that you can't say a word? You will never make me believe that you—you—don't know where to lay your hands on a couple of hundred. You have made me curse the day I was born. . . ."

"Mr Massy," said Captain Whalley suddenly, without stirring.

The engineer started violently.

"If that is so I can only beg you to forgive me."

"Starboard," muttered the Serang to the helmsman; and the *Sofala* began to swing round the bend into the second reach.

"Ough!" Massy shuddered. "You make my blood run cold. What made you come here? What made you come aboard that evening all of a sudden, with your high talk and your money—tempting me? I always wondered what was your motive? You fastened yourself on me to have easy times and grow fat on my life blood, I tell you. Was that it? I believe you are the greatest miser in the world, or else why . . ."

"No. I am only poor," in-

terrupted Captain Whalley, stonily.

"Steady," murmured the Serang. Massy turned away with his chin on his shoulder.

"I don't believe it," he said in his dogmatic tone. Captain Whalley made no movement. "There you sit like a gorged vulture—exactly like a vulture."

He embraced the middle of the reach and both the banks in one blank unseeing circular glance, and left the bridge slowly.

IX.

On turning to descend Massy perceived the head of Sterne the mate loitering, with his sly confident smile, his red moustaches and blinking eyes, at the foot of the ladder.

He had been a junior in one of the larger shipping concerns before joining the *Sofala*. He had thrown up his berth, he said, "on general principles." The promotion in the employ was very slow, he complained, and he thought it was time for him to try and get on a bit in the world. It seemed as though nobody would ever die or leave the firm; they all stuck fast in their berths till they got mildewed; he was tired of waiting for promotion. And he feared that when a vacancy did occur the best servants were by no means sure of being treated fairly. Besides, the captain he had to serve under—Captain Provost—was an unaccountable sort of man, and, he fancied, had taken a dislike to him for some reason or other. For doing rather

more than his bare duty as likely as not. When he had done anything wrong he could take a talking to, like a man; but he expected to be treated like a man too, and not to be addressed invariably as though he were a dog. He had asked Captain Provost plump and plain to tell him where he was at fault, and Captain Provost, in a most scornful way, had told him that he was a perfect officer, and that if he disliked the way he was being spoken to there was the gangway—he could take himself off ashore at once. But everybody knew what sort of man Captain Provost was. It was no use appealing to the office. Captain Provost had too much influence in the employ. All the same, they had to give him a good character. He made bold to say there was nothing in the world against him, and, as he had happened to hear that the mate of the *Sofala* had gone to the hospital that

morning with a sunstroke, he thought there would be no harm in seeing whether he would not do. . . .

He had come to Captain Whalley freshly shaved, red-faced, thin-flanked, throwing out his lean chest; and had recited his little tale with an open and manly assurance. Now and then his eyelids quivered slightly, his hand would steal up to the end of the flaming moustache; his eyebrows were straight, furry, and of a chestnut colour, and the directness of his frank gaze seemed to tremble on the verge of impudence. Captain Whalley had engaged him temporarily; then, the other man having been ordered home by the doctors, he had remained for the next trip, and then the next. He had now attained permanency, and the performance of his duties was marked by an air of serious, single-minded application. Directly he was spoken to, he began to smile attentively, with a great deference expressed in his whole attitude; but there was in the rapid winking which went on all the time something quizzical, as though he had possessed the word of some universal joke cheating all creation and impenetrable to other mortals.

Grave and smiling he watched Massy come down step by step; and, when the chief engineer on reaching the deck had swung about, they found themselves face to face. Matched as to height and utterly dissimilar, they confronted each other as if there had been something between them—something else than the bright strip of sun-

light that, falling through the wide lacing of two awnings, cut crosswise the narrow planking of the deck and separated their feet as it were a stream; something profound and subtle and incalculable, like an unexpressed understanding, a secret mistrust, or some sort of fear.

At last Sterne, blinking his deep-set eyes and sticking forward his scraped, clean-cut chin, as crimson as the rest of his face, murmured—

"You've seen? He grazed! You've seen?"

Massy, contemptuous, and without raising his yellow, fleshy countenance, replied in the same pitch—

"Maybe. But if it had been you we would have been stuck fast in the mud."

"Pardon me, Mr Massy. I beg to deny it. Of course a shipowner may say what he jolly well pleases on his own deck. That's all right; but I beg to . . ."

"Get out of my way!"

The other had a slight start, the impulse of suppressed indignation perhaps, but held his ground. Massy's downward glance wandered right and left, as though the deck all round Sterne had been bestrewn with eggs that must not be broken, and he had looked irritably for places where he could set his feet in flight. In the end he too did not move, though there was plenty of room to pass on.

"I heard you say up there," went on the mate—and a very just remark it was too—"that there's always something wrong. . . ."

"Eavesdropping is what's wrong with *you*, Mr Sterne."

"Now, if you would only listen to me for a moment, Mr Massy, sir, I could . . ."

"You are a sneak," interrupted Massy in a great hurry, and even managed to get so far as to repeat, "a common sneak," before the mate had broken in argumentatively—

"Now, sir, what is it you want? You want . . ."

"I want—I want," stammered Massy, infuriated and astonished—"I want. How do you know I want anything? How dare you? . . . What do you mean? . . . What are you after—you . . ."

"Promotion." Sterne silenced him with a sort of candid bravado. The engineer's round soft cheeks quivered still, but he said quietly enough—

"You are only worrying my head off," and Sterne met him with a confident little smile.

"A chap in business I know (well up in the world he is now) used to tell me that this was the proper way. 'Always push on to the front,' he would say. 'Keep yourself well before your boss. Interfere whenever you get a chance. Show him what you know. Worry him into seeing you.' That was his advice. Now I know no other boss than you here. You are the owner, and no one else counts for *that* much in my eyes. See, Mr Massy? I want to get on. I make no secret of it that I am one of the sort that means to get on. These are the men to make use of, sir. You haven't arrived at the top of the tree, sir, without finding that out—I daresay."

"Worry your boss in order to get on," mumbled Massy, as if awestruck by the irreverent originality of the idea. "I shouldn't wonder if this was just what the Blue Anchor people kicked you out of the employ for. Is that what you call getting on? You shall get on in the same way here if you aren't careful—I can promise you."

At this Sterne hung his head, thoughtful, perplexed, winking hard at the deck. All his attempts to enter into confidential relations with his owner had led of late to nothing better than these dark threats of dismissal; and a threat of dismissal would check him at once into a hesitating silence as though he were not sure that the proper time for defying it had come. On this occasion he seemed to have lost his tongue for a moment, and Massy, getting in motion, heavily passed him by with an abortive attempt at shouldering. Sterne defeated it by stepping aside. He turned then swiftly, opening his mouth very wide as if to shout something after the engineer, but seemed to think better of it.

Always—as he was ready to confess—on the look-out for an opening to get on, it had become an instinct with him to watch the conduct of his immediate superiors for something "that one could lay hold of." It was his belief that no skipper in the world would keep his command for a day if only the owners could be "made to know." This romantic and naïve theory had led him into trouble more than

once, but he remained incorrigible; and his character was so instinctively disloyal that whenever he joined a ship the intention of ousting his commander out of the berth and taking his place was always present at the back of his head, as a matter of course. It filled the leisure of his waking hours with the reveries of careful plans and compromising discoveries—the dreams of his sleep with images of lucky turns and favourable accidents. Skippers had been known to sicken and die at sea, than which nothing could be better to give a smart mate a chance of showing what he's made of. They also would tumble overboard sometimes: he had heard of one or two such cases. Others again . . . But, as it were constitutionally, he was faithful to the belief that the conduct of no single one of them would stand the test of careful watching by a man who "knew what's what" and who kept his eyes "skinned pretty well" all the time.

After he had gained a permanent footing on board the *Sofala* he allowed his perennial hope to rise high. To begin with, it was a great advantage to have an old man for captain: the sort of man besides who in the nature of things was likely to give up the job before long from one cause or another. Sterne was greatly chagrined, however, to notice that he did not seem anyway near being past his work yet. Still, these old men go to pieces all at once sometimes. Then there was the owner-engineer close at hand to be impressed by his

zeal and steadiness. Sterne never for a moment doubted the obvious nature of his own merits (he was really an excellent officer); only, nowadays, professional merit alone does not take a man along fast enough. A chap must have some push in him, and must keep his wits at work too to help him forward. He made up his mind to inherit the charge of this steamer if it was to be done at all; not indeed estimating the command of the *Sofala* as a very great catch, but for the reason that, out East especially, to make a start is everything, and one command leads to another.

He began by promising himself to behave with great circumspection; moreover, Massy's sombre and fantastic humours intimidated him at first as being outside one's usual sea experience; but he was quite intelligent enough to realise almost from the first that he was there in the presence of an exceptional situation. His peculiar prying imagination penetrated it quickly, and the feeling that there was in it an element which eluded his grasp served only to exasperate his impatience to get on. And so one trip came to an end, then another, and he had begun his third before he saw an opening by which he could step in with any sort of effect. It had all been very queer and very obscure; it had been going on near him, and as if separated by a chasm from the common life and the working routine of the ship, which was exactly like the life and the routine of any

other coasting steamer of that class.

Then one day he made his discovery.

It came to him after all these weeks of watchful observation and puzzled surmises, suddenly, like the long-sought solution of a riddle that suggests itself at last to the mind in a flash. Not within the same authority, however. Great heavens! Could it be that? And after remaining thunderstruck for a few seconds he shook it off with self-contumely, as though it had been the product of an unhealthy bias towards the Incredible, the Inexplicable, the Unheard-of—the Mad!

This—the illuminating moment—had occurred the trip before, on the return passage. They had just left a place of call on the mainland called Pangu; they were steaming straight out of a bay. To the east a massive headland closed the view, with the tilted edges of the rocky strata showing through its ragged clothing of rank bushes and thorny creepers. The wind had begun to sing in the rigging; the sea along the coast, green and as if swollen a little above the line of the horizon, seemed to pour itself over, time after time, with a slow and thundering fall, into the shadow of the leeward cape; and across the wide opening the nearest of a group of small islands stood in view darkly in the hazy yellow light of a breezy sunrise; still farther out the hummocky tops of other islets peeped out motionless above the water, with the channels between scoured tumultuously by the breeze.

The usual track of the *Sofala* both going and returning on every trip led her for a few miles along this reef-infested region. She followed a broad lane of water, dropping astern, one after another, these crumbs of the earth's crust resembling a squadron of dismasted hulks run in disorder upon a foul ground of rocks and shoals. Some of these fragments of land appeared, indeed, no bigger than a stranded ship; others, quite flat, lay awash like anchored rafts, like ponderous, black rafts of stone; several, heavily timbered and round at the base, emerged in squat domes of deep green foliage that shuddered darkly all over to the flying touch of cloud shadows driven by the sudden gusts of the squally season. The thunderstorms of the coast broke frequently over that cluster; it turned then all shadowy in its whole extent; it turned more dark, and as if more still in the play of fire; as if more impenetrably silent in the peals of thunder with its blurred shapes vanishing—dissolving utterly at times in the thick rain, to reappear clear-cut and black in the stormy light against the grey sheet of the cloud—like enormous lumps of coal scattered on the slaty round table of the sea. There it had remained unscathed by the storms, unfretted by the changes of epoch, resisting the work of years, the same as when first beheld by Western eyes four hundred years ago from the deck of a high-pooped caravel.

It was one of these secluded spots that may be found on

the busy sea, as on land you come sometimes upon the clustered houses of a hamlet untouched by men's hands, untouched by their need, by their thought, and as if forgotten by time itself. The life of the world had passed it over, and the multitudes of seafowl, urging their way from all the points of the horizon to sleep on the outer rocks of the group, had unrolled the converging evolutions of their flight in long sombre streamers on the glow of uncounted sunsets. The palpitating cloud of their wings soared and stooped over the pinnacles of the rocks, over the rocks slender like spires, over the rocks squat like martello towers, over the pyramidal heaps of rocks like fallen ruins, over the lines of bald boulders showing like a wall of stones battered to pieces and scorched by lightning — with the sleepy clear glimmer of water in every breach. A great noise, the noise of their continuous and violent screaming, filled the air.

It would meet the *Sofala* coming up from Batu Beru; it would meet her on quiet evenings, a pitiless and savage clamour enfeebled by distance, the clamour of seabirds settling to rest, and struggling for a footing at the end of the day. No one noticed it especially on board; it was the voice of their ship's unerring landfall, ending the steady stretch of a hundred miles. She had made good her course, she had run her distance till the punctual islets began to emerge one by one, the points of rocks, the hummocks of earth . . . and the cloud of

birds hovered — the restless cloud emitting a strident and cruel uproar, the sound of the familiar scene, the living part of the broken land beneath, of the outspread sea, and of the high sky without a flaw.

But when the *Sofala* closed in after sunset she would find everything very still there under the mantle of the night. All would be still, dumb, almost invisible—but for the blotting out of the low constellations occulted in turns behind the vague masses of the islets whose true outlines eluded the eye amongst the dark spaces of the heaven: and the ship's three lights, resembling three stars—the red and the green with the white above—her three lights, like three companion stars wandering on the earth, held their unswerving course for the passage at the southern end of the group. Sometimes there were human eyes open to watch them come nearer, travelling smoothly in the sombre void; the eyes of a naked fisherman in his canoe floating over a reef. He thought drowsily: "Ha! The fire-ship that once in every moon goes in and comes out of Pangu bay." More he did not know of her. And just as his ear had caught the faint rhythm of the propeller beating the calm water a mile and a half away, the time would come for the *Sofala* to alter her course, the lights would swing off him their triple beam — and disappear.

A few miserable, half-naked families, a sort of outcast tribe of long-haired, lean, and wild-eyed people, got their living in this lonely wilderness of islets,

lying like an abandoned out-work of the land at the gates of the bay. Within the knots and loops of the rocks the water was more transparent than crystal under their crooked and leaky canoes, scooped out of the trunk of a tree: the forms of the bottom undulated slightly to the dip of a paddle; and the men seemed to hang in the air, they seemed to hang enclosed within the fibres of a dark, sodden log, fishing patiently in the unsteady pellucid green air above the shoals.

Their bodies stalked brown and emaciated as if dried up in the sunshine; their lives ran out silently; the homes where they were born, went to rest, and died—flimsy sheds of rushes and coarse grass eked out with a few ragged mats—were hidden out of sight from the open sea. No glow of their household fires ever kindled for a seaman a red spark upon the blind night of the group: and the calms of the coast, the flaming long calms of the equator, the unbreathing, concentrated calms like the deep introspection of a passionate nature, brooded awfully for days and weeks together over the unchangeable inheritance of their children; till at last the stones, hot like live embers, scorched the naked sole, till the water clung warm, and sickly, and as if thickened, about the legs of lean men with girded loins, wading thigh-deep in the pale blaze of the shallows. And it would happen now and then that the *Sofala*, through some delay in one of the ports of call, would heave in sight making for Pangu bay as late as noonday.

Only a blurring cloud at first, the thin mist of her smoke would arise mysteriously from an empty point on the clear line of sea and sky. The taciturn fishermen within the reefs stretched their arms pointing to each other; and the brown figures stooping on the tiny beaches, the brown figures of men, women, and children grubbing in the sand in search of turtles' eggs, would rise up, crooked elbow aloft and hand over the eyes, to watch this monthly apparition glide straight on towards them, swerve off—and go by. Their ears heard the panting of that ship; their eyes would follow her till she passed between the two capes of the mainland going at full speed as though she hoped to make her way unchecked into the very bosom of the earth.

On such days the luminous sea would give no sign of the dangers lurking on both sides of her path. Everything remained still, crushed by the overwhelming power of the light; and the whole group, opaque in the sunshine,—the rocks resembling pinnacles, the rocks resembling spires, the rocks resembling ruins; the forms of islets resembling beehives, resembling mole-hills; the islets recalling the shapes of haystacks, the contours of ivy-clad towers,—would stand reflected together upside down in the unwrinkled water, like carved toys of ebony disposed on the silvered plate-glass of a mirror.

The first touch of blowing weather would envelop the whole at once in the spume of

the windward breakers, as if in a sudden cloudlike burst of steam; and the clear water seemed fairly to boil in all the passages. The provoked sea outlined exactly in a design of angry foam the wide base of the group, the submerged base on which it sat; the submerged level of broken waste and refuse left over from the building of the coast near by, and projecting its dangerous spurs, all awash, far into the channel; bristling with wicked long spits often a mile long, with deadly spits made of froth and stones.

And even nothing more than a brisk breeze—as on that morning, the voyage before, when the *Sofala* left Pangu bay early, and Mr Sterne's discovery was to blossom out like a flower of incredible and evil aspect from the tiny seed of instinctive suspicion,—even such a breeze had enough strength to tear the placid mask from the face of the sea. To Sterne, gazing with indifference, it had been like a revelation to behold for the first time the dangers marked by the hissing livid patches on the water as distinctly as on the engraved paper of a chart. It came into his mind that this was the sort of day most favourable for a stranger attempting the passage: a clear day, just windy enough for the sea to break on every ledge, buoying, as it were, the channel plainly to the sight; whereas during a calm you had nothing to depend on but the compass and the practised judgment of your eye.

And yet the successive captains of the *Sofala* had had to take her through at night more than once. Nowadays you could not afford to throw away six or seven hours of a steamer's time. That you couldn't. But then use is everything, and with proper care . . . The channel was broad and safe enough; the main point was to hit upon the entrance correctly in the dark—for if a man got himself involved in that stretch of broken water over yonder he would never get out with a whole ship—if he got out at all.

This was Sterne's last train of thought independent of the great discovery. He had just seen to the securing of the anchor, and had remained forward idling away a moment or two. The captain was in charge on the bridge. With a slight yawn he turned away from his survey of the sea and leaned his shoulders against the fish davit.

These, properly speaking, were the very last moments of ease he was to know on board the *Sofala*. All the instants that came after were to be pregnant with purpose and intolerable with perplexity. No more idle, random thoughts; the discovery would put them on the rack, till sometimes he wished to goodness he had been fool enough not to make it at all. And yet, if his chance to get on rested on the discovery of "something wrong," he could not have hoped for a greater stroke of luck.

(To be continued.)

A MILITARY VIEW OF THE CORONATION.

BY ONE OF THE CROWD.

"YOUNG fellow, you just stand where you are, and think yourself lucky that you have got a place: I have met your sort before," and the country constable, imported for the occasion, took the accredited one by the two shoulders and thrust him back into the crowd. No. Z 50, Sussex, had heard of Londoners and their ways. He was resolved that he would not err except on the credit side of caution. Do not men even forge bank-notes? then how much easier would it be to print "TO THE POLICE, please pass, &c.," on a piece of white card. The signature? To this country cousin of the metropolitan force "Ed. Bradford" conveyed less meaning than the "Ich Dien" inscribed on the flag that fluttered above him. The crowd, still good-natured in spite of six hours of waiting, expressed their sympathy in derisive laughter. "You've forgot your coronet, young man; Robert's taking nothing but coronets to-day." "Look here, just you step back, you ain't goin' ter sneak a front place by trying to kid a policeman." The man who had slept with the kerbstone upon which he now stood as his pillow, was not going to be deprived of any of the benefits accruing to his midnight vigil. He was in deathly earnest, and the accredited one would

have maintained but a precarious advantage, except for the arrival of a metropolitan inspector. With him the little ticket worked wonders, and with an expression of opinion about local auxiliaries which was not complimentary to the suspicious No. Z 50, he passed the accredited one into the great scarlet-fringed aisle of London, S.W., *en fête!*

The blood of the man who is not moved by a military spectacle must indeed pulse thinly through his veins. Some enthusiasts say that the principle of gay caparisonings for soldiers is wrong. That it would bring the army into closer touch with the nation if we sent our soldiers out to do their peace duties in the casual garb of civil life. What would the Coronation of Edward VII. have been worth if it had not been for the wealth of colour in which it was painted! What would that coronation have been without the army! As a spectacle, it would have been as idle as the golden harvest field of the artist's canvas, without the poppy and the corn-flower. The backbone of King Edward's Coronation was the army. To the army, therefore, in the main, will this short paper be confined. And what a wealth of tradition exists bound up in those hundreds of different liveries, composing the representative Empire army which

presented arms to the newly crowned King that day! But it is not with the far-away traditions that we would deal; it is rather with the recent labours of the army, which have kept those past traditions green, that we would associate the coronation pageant. The composition of the parade which lined London's streets was absolutely unprecedented. It is probable that never again in the history of the Empire or the world will such a parade be possible. Literally the "Empire in arms" was represented; for not the least interesting feature of the pageant lay in the representatives of the South African, Australian, New Zealand, and Canadian contingents—and the majority of these emergency units, now that the war is over, will cease to exist, will pass out of being, except as a tradition of the past.

We are not seekers after the newest sensation, and it is not in a spirit of comparison with the Regular Army that we give prominence to the civilian levies which have joined the senior services in battle. We are well alive to the limitation of the irregular soldier and the solid worth of the patient professional. But the latter is always with us; we know every button upon his tunic. We know that he is the backbone of our military strength, that without him the amateur would avail us little. But the employment of the amateur, side by side with the professional, has opened such a field of possibilities, such a promise for the future, that we cannot be branded

simply as partisan chroniclers if we recall here some little history of the corps which in a few days will be represented but by a name. The regular lives for ever, the phantom past is personified in the existing present; but the irregular, the gay dragon-fly of the campaign, has but a one-day life. To-day the irregular lives and cocks his hat; to-morrow he is gone, and is gone for ever, unless he has writ his name large upon the book of fame.

It is possible, therefore, to appreciate some little of the interest with which we passed down the rough karki lines that edged the Mall. The route across the Horse Guard's parade was held by a company of Sappers. Behind them stood grouped the men whom the steamship Bavarian had brought direct from the veldt to the Coronation of a King-Emperor. Among the officers grouped at the foot of the official stands were many familiar faces. Cox of the New South Wales Lancers, the first Colonial officer to arrive in the theatre of war and the last to leave it. The grey-bearded commander of French's scouts, recovered from the grievous wounds received at the New Bethesda ambushade. There are others, but we must pass on; the police will not have men loitering between the lines. The jaunty hat with blackcock tail, surely that corps was raised north of the Tweed! They are Tullibardine's desperadoes, the Scottish Horse. Youngest of Colonial

Irregulars, it is true. But though their time has been short, they have squeezed into their brief lease of life as much fighting as their seniors. At once the gay Coronation scene disappears, and you refight the breathless struggle of Vlaktefontein, and see again the mist-enveloped ridge at Brakenlaagte. The fierce struggle round the guns, the prostrate troopers, with but two rounds a-piece, silently waiting for the horsemen in the mist to reduce the range until it should be deadly. The last fitful volley, the vain call for ammunition-supply, the dull rattle of bayonets determinedly fixed, and then the final carnage, till the guns were lost. These are of the men who lined that ridge.

Nor have they been singular in upholding the traditions of Scotland's fighting men. There are other Scotsmen here whose record is as brilliant—Lord Lovat's Ghillies, than whom no better cragsmen ever set foot upon a kopje. There are legends in the Orange Colony that the boldest of Boer Commandants would change direction when he found himself in the vicinity of these keen-sensed Highlanders. "They will see us as soon as we see them." What greater tribute could be paid to the service quality of a corps claiming no higher military training than the lore of moor and deer-forest!

Then who came next! The Imperial Light Horse. Men from the Gold Reef whose endurance had been taxed to breaking point by a treatment

which the home-staying Briton can never conceive as possible. These are the men, steeled in the struggle by an influence which exceeds even that of discipline or patriotism. Free-men that have eaten dirt, striking the blow to break the bondage they had brooked so long. What is the light you see in their faces, what impulse directs the commander of the detachment to call them so suddenly to attention? Is not Ian Hamilton passing down the road at the head of his staff, the man who led them up the bullet-splashed slopes of Elands-laagte, and cheered them on blood-washed Wagon Hill! Proud man to have commanded such men, proud men in such a commander.

And the next is as great a corps! Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry. Who in the present generation will forget the story of Spion Kop? Even our late enemy, never exultant, speaks of that bevelled hill-crest with bated breath as "*Plat Kop-slagveldt*." And the place of slaughter is indeed a true rendering of the situation upon that crowded plateau. Converted into a charnel-house by a ceaseless avalanche of lead, churned into a shambles by a tornado of bursting shell. Yet the diabolical skill of the chemist and the most evil ingenuity of man could not break the determination of the gallant Thorneycroft and his decimated band—"I am in command here—there is no surrender!"

Let us move still farther down the line. Who are these

jaunty fellows with cat's skins in their rakish "beavers"! "Rimington's Tigers," to be sure. Or rather what was known as Rimington's, now transformed into Damant's Horse. Gay knights of the road, soldiers of fortune, popinjays of the farmhouse drawing-room—call them what you like, but "give them best" in the one virtue. They can fight. Who shall tell of the nameless skirmishes to which they have been brought by love of forage and adventure, of the sudden changes they have seen from sentiment to sordid strife! But give them the credit of being men. They galloped out of the jaws of death at Sanna's Post, and then turned like men to pluck something unburnt out of the burning pile of disaster.

What fine fellows are these whom we meet in the next alignment, with great green pugreese and ostrich feathers? Who has not heard of Driscoll's Scouts? Also knights of the veldt, but of another kind. Few of the men who came to attention on the coronation parade as Driscoll's Scouts but could claim blood relationship with the enemy they fought. Many even had shouldered the rifle at some period in the ranks of the Republicans.

Who come next—men with a dash of claret velvet on their shoulder-straps? Farmers from the beautiful glades of Natal. The very first volunteers to be in the field, the men who endured Ladysmith, and later quenched a second and third

invasion of their beautiful colony. Next, the Cape Police and Cape Mounted Rifles. The lost legion, the best fighting material that Cape Colony of itself could produce. The men with whom Dalgety held Wepener for fourteen bloody days. The corps which for eighteen months could make honourable boast that no unwounded man from its ranks had ever fallen into the enemy's hands.

Who could pass by the Rhodesian Volunteers without a twinge of satisfaction that they came from the same stock as ourselves. The men who, under the dogged and undefeated Plumer, for ten long months made bricks without straw between Tuli and the Crocodile Pools. A side issue, it is true, shorn of the glamour attaching to the grand army ploughing its stately furrow through the heart of the Republics, but none the less doing the menial work for the grand army in the shadow of the wings, with equal devotion as those performing in the full blaze of the footlights. Meeting and surmounting difficulties which were foreign and unheard of with the central parts of the great drama. But—

"Please, sir, you must step back; we have orders to clear the route."

The military band which has endeavoured to while away some of the weary moments of waiting disappears into a side alley and forms up in the alignment of the route. A great silence of expectancy seizes upon the crowd. A solitary

policeman comes galloping down the sanded way. Then a gilded staff-officer in anxious haste. The crowd cheer him, since they have nothing better to do—then lapse back into the previous oppressive silence. *Boom! boom! boom!* The crowd starts as by one impulse. It is only the battery of Horse Artillery in Hyde Park announcing to all London that the King and Queen have taken their seats in the State Coach which is to convey them to the Abbey. Then a sound catches the ear: at first it is faint, not unlike the rattle of the chain-cable of a steamer dropping anchor. It is the clapping of many thousand pairs of hands. It dies away, and a more musical sound fills the air, the boom of many voices blended in acclamation! The head of the procession is in sight. "Order arms!" comes the guttural order. The long line of bayonets sweep upwards, and as the sun suddenly flashes out, the edging of scarlet and buff is fringed with a shimmering line of silver.

Of a truth a princely procession. A squadron of glistening Life Guards, a posse of quaintly attired watermen, and a long following of distinguished soldiers. But long before the procession had formed itself in the precincts of Buckingham Palace the crowd had made up its mind upon whom, other than the royalties, it would bestow its favours. "Make way there, make way for an old lady who 'as come to see Kitchener. 'E's killed three of 'er sons, 'e has;" and the

good-natured crowd, appreciating the old lady's undeniable right to see the great soldier, gave her a place on the kerbstone. And presently the flood of brilliant procession brought the great soldier level with us. He was one of a group of three—in some ways a group perhaps the most distinguished in the whole procession. The crowd had eyes only for the popular hero of the hour. But to the more philosophic enthusiast there are soldiers in the world other than the man who put his signature to the protocol in Pretoria. And we doubt if England possesses a more capable leader of men than the general who with Admiral Seymour of Tientsin fame rode level with Lord Kitchener. Those who served with General Gaselee in the mountain fastnesses which gird northern India as with an ironstone corral will never forget the qualities displayed by this quiet unassuming man. The serious soldiers of India think with pride of the manner in which he fought those desperate rearguard struggles—the Kahudharra Pass and the retirement from the Bazar Valley. Nor will the Allied Force in China forget the cool placid leader, the true type of an English gentleman, who relieved the gasping legations at Peking. But on this day the crowd in its blind infatuation had eyes for no other of the King's mounted lackeys than Lord Kitchener, and later, the Commander-in-Chief. Little they recked that the gallant Plumer rode in his fashion as

A.D.C. before the King; that Pilcher, the arch-raider in South Africa; that Park, the intrepid colonel of the Devons, who cleared the slopes of Waggon Hill with his West countrymen; that Dixon, the handsome brigadier, whose calm judgment alone saved Vlaktefontein from becoming a disaster, also rode as personal retainers of the King. The distinguished *cortège* passed out of sight, the troops on the streets came to "the present," and a deafening roar rolled up from many thousands of throats. The Royal Coach had come.

It may be a relic of barbarism, it may, in the light of modern progression, be an empty pageant. But it pleased many thousands of sightseers that day, and many millions of people throughout a huge Empire. The sight of the King, snatched by Divine Providence from the very verge of the grave, quickened the pulse of the most laggard of his subjects. The ovation was splendid and moving. The King himself was affected, and as he acknowledged the general expression of homage his moving lips disclosed his agitation. He was thinner and paler than usual; but he looked a King. In a moment the great gilded Coach had lumbered by, bearing the monarch and his queenly wife out of our immediate sight to give further pleasure to their subjects.

The troops came to the "order," then to the "stand at ease," and we were again left with only the crowd to enter-

tain us. Paper bags and baskets appeared on every side, and the crowd lurched. They were in jovial mood; their patience had been well repaid, and they now fell to, to discuss the chances of a second view. Here we left them, and passing into Parliament Street viewed perhaps the most gorgeous strip of the Coronation canvas. Asia was painted large upon this scene. The Indian and Colonial Guard of Honour ran in great coloured parallels right down to where the stately Brigade of Guards took up the final alignment to the Abbey. Never before had the vastness of the Empire over which Edward the Seventh was about to be crowned King-Emperor so appealed to us, as we stood in the cleared broadway of Parliament Street. Within eyeshot were representative troops from every corner of the world. In front a line of Indian troops. Lithe Sikhs of Ludiana with heavy turbans; swart little Gurkhas from the valleys of Nepal; powerful Pathans, the pick of Yagistan tribesmen; sleek Brahmins from the valley of the Ganges; jaunty Jats and Mahrattas from Central India; Punjabi Mohammedans from Oudh; black Sudras from Madras. But what was more wonderful—parchment-skinned Chinese in coats of beetle-green; sturdy little Dyaks from Borneo; stalwart Hausas from Central Africa and Nigeria; quaintly caparisoned Fijians from the South Sea Islands; broad-chested Canadians, self-possessed Australians

and independent New Zealanders,—all dressing, within a stone's-throw of the Foreign and Colonial Offices, within shouting distance of the Houses of Parliament, with but the stately Grenadiers, holding the record of England's military greatness on their colours, separating them from the Abbey and the King. Was there ever before such an exhibition of world-wide military power!

Yet it was not all serious. The massive dignity of the pageant was relieved here and there by those little gleams of burlesque which seem inseparable from the pomp of all regal display. We waited for the Abbey to disgorge its congregation of Britain's Peers. The scene was worth the trouble which it cost us with the police. As soon as the proces-

sion had moved off amid the booming of the salutes, a flood of Peers burst from the Abbey doors. All pomp and dignity were thrown to the winds. They were impelled by one common impulse, each was actuated with one burning desire—to smoke. Nothing could have been more ludicrous than the appearance of England's selected seniors as they struggled with unruly robes in a search for leaf and tinder: each coronet was askew, the robes bunched awkwardly, and for all the world we could not help thinking of stage properties. Which would give colour to a remark that is accredited to the King, when discussing the appearance of his Peers, —“Well, I thought that my Lord Chancellor looked exactly like a pepper-box!”

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

BELGIUM: ITS ASPECT AND DISCOURTESY — BAUDELAIRE'S UNWRITTEN SATIRE—WHY THE BELGIANS ARE INSOLENT—THEIR GLORIOUS PAST —THE BEAUTY OF GHENT AND BRUGES—VAN EYCK AND MEMLING—THE CROWNING OF KING EDWARD—THE FLEET AT SPITHEAD—THE BRITISH ACADEMY — WHAT IT WILL ACHIEVE — ACADEMIES, FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

BELGIUM is not the traveller's paradise. It was not of that rough, untutored country that the poet thought, when he declared that "a man's best welcome's at an inn." The Belgians, in truth, are famous neither for hospitality nor for manners, and though they are willing enough to profit by the stranger, they prefer to profit without civility. Their tavern-keepers know nothing of the delightful courtesy which the French add as another sauce to your dinner; and if you incautiously enter a Belgium shop, you are either fleeced or driven forth with insolence. The aspect of the streets is depressed and listless. The prevailing type is dull, when it is not anarchistic; and the receding chins, which catch your eye at every street corner, explain the crime of Sipido. And with all the deadening of the æsthetic qualities there is a vast increase of material prosperity. A country, whose king is said to be its best man of business, need not lag behind in the race for wealth, and Belgium loses none of its opportunities either at home or in Africa. Some among its most ancient cities are already blackened with the smoke of factories,

and no one can travel across the border from France without being amazed at the changed and busy aspect. Yet increasing wealth has added no gaiety to this strange country, and, parodying Dr Johnson, we might say that the pleasantest prospect for a young Belgian is the highroad to Paris. Between the French and their neighbours there is indeed no love lost. The similarity of language is rather a cause of division than a tie. On the one hand is the contempt of the greater country for a people which speaks its honoured tongue with an uncouth accent. On the other is the jealousy of the lesser country which sees itself despised, and knows that its greatest men are easily absorbed across the border. Nor is this feeling of recent growth. Baudelaire, having passed some unhappy years in Brussels, sketched a work—'La Belgique Vraie'—which remains in the list of unwritten masterpieces. It is matter for regret that the poet never finished that which he sketched with so much acrimony, and which, though overcharged in every page, would have been a very pretty specimen of invective. But,

strangely enough, Belgium, whetstone as it has been to the wit of others, has lately been attempting to sharpen its own wit. It has revealed during the past year a faculty for insolence which not even Germany has surpassed. Why it chose England for its butt we know not. We can only see a monstrous impropriety in the choice. It is to England that Belgium owes its separate existence, its national life, and without England's support it might easily become once more the cockpit of Europe. Yet doubtless the brave Belgians, who are never likely to take up arms themselves, hoped to witness, at a cheap rate, the downfall of England. Even then her foolish acrimony is not wholly explained, and perhaps we may best seek its cause in the sad memory of a glorious past, to which a rather sordid present in no way corresponds.

For there is no doubt of Belgium's glorious past. To wander in her cities is to recall Charles V. and the brave Dukes of Burgundy, to remember that the grandees of Spain once brought hither their cruelty and their magnificence. Once upon a time the life of Bruges or of Antwerp was as noble as their art. August patrons were flattered by painters whose outward show did not yield to the splendour of their pictures. And, decadent as Belgium is, her glories are not all a dream. Her taverns are still rich in the wine of Burgundy, and her galleries have not surrendered all the spoils of her great epoch. There is, moreover, a charm in

dying cities which always eludes prosperity of modern growth, and this charm belongs peculiarly to Bruges and Ghent. Even though commerce is laying a heavy hand upon Ghent, neither of these cities is of to-day either in aspect or character. To step into them after the common bustle is to feel that from a torrent you have reached a backwater—a backwater brilliant with lilies and fragrant with the scent of old-fashioned flowers. The ancient houses, the stately churches, the quiet hospitals, have watched many a revolution, and seen the passing shadows of many nations. And though walls hold the impress of no experience save time, not even the tourist can rid himself of association. Nor has the life of the past wholly ceased. The *beguinages*, at least, are all untouched by the hand of the hustler; and the white *cornettes* of the nuns, seen as they stand at their quiet doorways or kneel on the spotless floor of the spotless church, suggest another age, another life than ours. But it is by its picture-galleries that Belgium still keeps a noble pre-eminence. Certain painters there are who reveal themselves only to the visitors of Ghent and Bruges, and though we would welcome the presence of certain masterpieces in London, we must perforce confess that a picture has an added charm if it be seen in the surroundings which were an inspiration to its painter. And this year Bruges holds out an unwonted attraction. For there is gathered together such a collection of the works of the early

Flemish masters as is never likely to be seen again. Van der Weyden, Pourbus, Breughel, and the rest are all admirably represented; but the two painters to whom we turn with the greatest pleasure are Jan van Eyck and Memlinc. For these twain are the real kings of Bruges.

Their fame, splendid as it was in their own time and as it is to-day, was for a while overshadowed. Jan van Eyck long belonged to legend, for was he not the first inventor of painting in oil? And as for Memlinc, the dictionaries of painters found no room for his name even as late as 1824. But at last both have recovered their glory, and are universally known for the masters they are. And it is in their right environment that you may see their masterpieces if you visit Bruges. The city which they knew and in which they worked still lives; and though perhaps we would rather see the exquisite works of Memlinc in the Hospital of St Jean, which is their home, though maybe Jan van Eyck more intimately belongs to the little museum which commonly shelters his masterpieces, neither he nor Memlinc is out of place in the old *place* of Bruges. As we look at the delicate pictures painted by the two great primitives, we cannot but reflect that the forerunners of all the arts have an advantage which none of their successors enjoy. They are not troubled by the chatter of the schools. They come forth to view the

world with a fresh eye and an unwearied brain. Where all is new and untried, they may cultivate a charming naiveté, which can never be touched again save by the hand of insincerity. They look upon the fields and the trees, the streets and the houses, with an engaging simplicity which you meet nowhere else save in the authentic fashioners of folklore. For all their air of truth, there is in the pictures of Van Eyck and Memlinc a suggestion of the fairy-story. In the atmosphere of their paintings you would not be surprised if you witnessed the villainies of the wicked uncle or the prowess of the youngest brother. Again, though Holy Writ or the Saints suggest their subjects, you cannot think of their personages or their landscapes as anything else than the daily experience of the painters. The Eleven Thousand Virgins were assuredly born within the precincts of Bruges; that knight sauntering down the road is a true Fleming; the horseman who halts at the town-gate was never nearer than Ghent to the Star of Bethlehem. And this it is that, from a literary point of view, makes the early Flemish pictures so strangely interesting. They are a transcript from the life, not of the Jews, whose history they illustrate, but of the township in which they were painted. An open background or a glimpse through a window reveals the habit of the time with marvellous delicacy and precision. Nothing can exceed

the skill wherewith the tiny figures are set in to the landscape; nothing the insight wherewith the character of each is indicated. For Van Eyck and Memlinc, like all primitives, are true realists. They took so fine a pride in their medium that they aimed at expressing everything. Draperies, landscape, character were equally interesting to them, and their love of the actual was so strong that, as we have said, they seldom wandered far from their own city. The strangest example of ingenuous realism to be seen at Bruges is, perhaps, Breughel's "Dénombrement de Bethlehem," in which the landscape is ice-bound, and in which all the personages are good Flemings, skating or warming their hands at a fire, and in which not even the golf-club is lacking. So their religious pictures suggest portraiture, and their portraits suggest real men and women. How justly seen, how beautifully painted, is Van Eyck's superb picture in the National Gallery! We know not which is the more finely rendered—the Man and Woman, or the Mirror and its reflection. And by the simplest methods the noblest result is attained. Memlinc's portraits are almost hieratic in their stiffness. The folded hands, the stern pose of the head, suggest that the painter adhered to an ancient tradition. Yet at the same time the sitters are alive with character; their individuality is never in doubt. Look, for instance, at the portrait of Mary Moreel. You feel that the painter exulted in

representing that lady's plain Flemish face seen through the transparent head-dress. Here, indeed, was the triumph of expression, but beyond that triumph is the woman herself, set before us *simplex munditiis*, plain in her neatness, for all time. But their most wonderful achievement is to reach a broad harmonising effect through a multiplicity of details. Nothing is omitted; the style is never large, as the style of Velasquez is large, but the parts are so delicately subordinated to the whole that it would be absurd to charge the worst of them with niggling. And through their works we can catch a glimpse of the painters themselves—simple and dignified in their life as in their art. They knew no catchpenny success; they never yielded to the vulgar greed of fame or money. Even if the reason be obscure, Memlinc's devotion to the Hospital of St Jean is confessed in the beautiful pictures which that dainty building enshrines, while Van Eyck was a courtier as well as a painter. He, at any rate, shared the magnificence of his patrons. Like Rubens after him, he went on embassies, and brought back from Portugal the portrait of Isabella which won the heart of Philip the Good. And though the art of painting has declined in Belgium, the sentiment which inspired these primitives of old is still alive in another art. No one who has seen Breughel's picture of the blind leading the blind, which hangs in the Louvre, and has read Maeterlinck's shadowy drama, "Les Aveugles," can

doubt that the two are renderings in different media of the same theme. But this is what baffles the traveller in Belgium. The outside is common—even vulgar. The essence that remains is exquisitely strange. To change the image, you are reminded at every turn that Bruges and Ghent have lived a glorious life, and if now they lie dead, at least they lie dead in glorious happiness. *Plus est en vous*, the motto of the Counts of Flanders, might still serve as a motto for Bruges. There is still more in the ancient city than meets the eye, and the vanity of the Belgians should easily be satisfied without the crude abuse of unoffending neighbours. But who was ever satisfied with the past? And is not the rancour of the Belgians based upon that natural unreasoning jealousy which would gladly exchange all the glories of yesterday for the commonplace prosperity of to-day?

It is not the fault of Belgium that King Edward VII. has at last been auspiciously crowned. Had the insolence of the journalists been a little more bitter, had the aim of the miserable Sipido been a little truer, another king would have succeeded to the throne of Victoria. But fortunately Sipido missed his mark, and King Edward survived to take part in the stateliest ordinance of dedication ever devised by the brain of man. Already enthroned in the hearts of his people, he is now formally dedicated to his people's service. Vows have been publicly exchanged of devotion on

the one hand, of loyal obedience on the other, and the anxiety of two months is amply atoned for. The procession from the Palace to the Abbey did not represent, as was intended by the earlier design, the vast Empire over which our King and Emperor rules. But what it lost in extent it gained in intimacy. As the carriages passed, there was no spectator who did not feel that the pageant belonged to Britain alone. There passed before us none save our own King and Queen, our own princes, and their proper escorts, so that the pride we took in the spectacle was genuinely ours, and unshared. Moreover, we took a legitimate pride not only in our King, but in the courage of our King. To be crowned within a few weeks of a grave operation needs more resolution than to face a foe upon the field of battle, and it is the King's bravery which astonished Europe as it delighted his subjects. And the coronation has silenced for always the tattling voices of the sooth-sayers. Surely, if proof were needed of the world's inveterate superstition it would be found in this: that the foolish prophet who declared that the King would never be crowned was able to shake the confidence of the people. For all our material advancement there is enough of the original savage left in us to make us afraid of bad omens, and to shiver at portents. One Indian Rajah, who came with a vast suite to witness the crowning of his Emperor, had so childlike a

belief in the fortune-tellers that he did not expect to witness the ceremony. He is auspiciously disappointed, and no word more will be heard, either here or in India, of the foolish wizards who prophesied evil.

While the ceremony of the coronation was distinguished by an agreeable intimacy, the Naval Review, conducted by the King at Spithead, symbolised for us the wider magnificence of the Empire. No finer theatre could be found for so splendid a spectacle than the strip of sea between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. The low-lying banks on either hand, the silver strait, the grey sky, afforded an exquisite setting for the great review. No one, save a naval expert, could look upon the long lines of battle-ships and cruisers without an honourable pride in the defences of the Empire. Before attacking England—a task which seems so easy to the sanguine temper of France—our enemies must first vanquish our fleet; and though we are content to believe that our fleet, like all other armaments, is still imperfect, we could not witness the naval review without a feeling of tranquillity. There was a vast fleet, confident if untried, and to make the parade no station was the poorer by a single ship. It was, in truth, an occasion for silent, simple patriotism. There is no need of boastfulness. It is idle to use again the stock phrases which delight the Chauvinist. But there was in the spectacle a reasonable ground of con-

fidence, and had it not been for the critics no jarring note would have been heard. In the early stages of the war which is just finished we heard much—too much—of the military expert, who was prepared, from the depths of his arm-chair, to advise our generals or to finish the campaign. Now that the campaign is finished, we hear of this strange bird no more. But, as if to make up for his disappearance, the naval expert is busier than ever. Now the naval expert is moved by the best intentions. He desires nothing else than the assured supremacy of his fatherland. He would permit no other nation to build a battle-ship or fire a torpedo. The poor man can never be really happy until the British fleet is large enough and strong enough to meet single-handed all the fleets of the world. The ambition is admirable, but it is impossible of realisation; and much though we like the notion, we know that we cannot condemn all our rivals to inaction, while we arm ourselves undisturbed. Of course, therefore, the naval expert regarded the Naval Review with amused contempt. He hastened to point out that all the ships displayed in the Solent were but painted impostures, that the fleet which the King reviewed was no fleet at all but a mere museum of ships. But ships, like men, grow old, and fall out of date, and it is perhaps excessive to insult a battle-ship because it was not built a year ago. The truth is, the naval expert has a deep-seated

hatred of all ships. He is a critic who has grown to hate that which he has determined to criticise, and we are sure that if he passed before the finest vessels in the world he would still be filled with a blind fury. For ourselves, we prefer to accept the sounder, saner views of naval officers, who lay no claim to *expertise*, and to believe that though our fleet is not the only fleet in the world, it has been constructed by men who are not imbecile, that it is commanded by energetic and accomplished officers, and that it is manned by sailors who know both how to shoot and how to die. After Spithead, then, we feel, as we felt before, a legitimate pride in our fleet, and though we know as well as the naval expert that it is not without blemish, we are content to recognise the limitations of all sublunary things, and to be sure that the iron walls of England, if they are less picturesque than the wooden walls of old, are just as strong to defend the country against the perils of invasion.

We have never been in favour of Academies. Literary Academies we regard with an especial disfavour. Fifty gentlemen cannot achieve collectively that which evades them individually. Again, in literature more than in any walk of life, an official standard is bound to be false. A man who writes to please a coterie is certain not to do justice to himself, and we are convinced that in the world of letters an oligarchy is no less

dangerous than a tyranny. Yet there is a superstition abroad that literature is dignified by public recognition, and that there is a vague quality called culture which may only be detected in an organised body. But the culture that is not personal is a sham, and we are afraid that in the name of Academies much nonsense has been talked. However, England is no longer without its Academy. The King has granted a charter, and forty-nine gentlemen are the happier for a new title. What the forty-nine will do when they meet together, or whether they will ever meet together, we do not know. Their advertised duty is "to promote historical, philosophical, and philological studies." The object is excellent, but it can only be performed in one way — by the separate and secret researches of the forty-nine. They will not accomplish a higher task because they now and again unite under one roof, or because they arrogate to themselves the same title. Professor Mayor will not better promote the study of Latin literature, for instance, because he is henceforth a colleague of Lord Rosebery. Nor, by the way, do we understand what Lord Rosebery is doing in this gallery. If ever the Academy meet in conclave, its place of meeting is not likely to be either a furrow or a tabernacle. And even if it did meet in a furrow, the presence of the other forty-eight would disturb the loneliness which, we believe, is essential to Lord Rosebery's contemplation. In truth, it is

hard to explain the election of his lordship on any possible ground. So far as we know, he is neither a philosopher nor a philologist, and only by courtesy may he be called a historian. The books which he has written are such as a man of the world might not disdain to compose. But, amiable though they be, they cannot be called original research. How, then, shall he promote the excellent objects which this new British Academy is said to keep in view?

No happier is Mr Balfour's election. Our Prime Minister is less of a historian than Lord Rosebery, and just as poor a philologist. It is true that he has some pretensions to philosophy; but we have always thought that the form of his admirable treatises was far better than their conclusions. In other words, Mr Balfour is a true man of letters. He possesses a far deeper sympathy with literature than any statesman of our day, and you may justly conclude from a single page of his works that, had he deserted politics, he might have been a scholarly and accomplished writer. Assuredly he would have every right to belong to a literary Academy, were such an institution established; but we cannot believe that he will be very useful in promoting philological studies, and for his own sake we wish he had not been invited to enter what must inevitably prove a temple of dulness. For the rest, some of the members seem rather tiresome, and some are indubitably learned. But beyond the

names of the members we are told nothing of the enterprise, and we shall be glad to know what steps this very motley band will take towards promoting the studies mentioned in the petition.

For one thing we are unfeignedly grateful. The British Academy does not pretend to have anything to do with literature. It will do nothing to guide taste or to purify style. There are not ten of the forty-nine who would be suitable models for the young in the proper conduct of the English language. No; the Academy which should do for England that which the French Academy is supposed to have done for France, is happily as far as ever from realisation. Our gallant forty-nine will not humble themselves with the making of a dictionary or with the settlement of grammatical disputes. They will, we imagine, be representative rather than active. One or more of their members will be chosen to speak for England at the jubilee of similar institutions in France or Germany. It is then that they will most energetically promote the studies which they have taken under their protection, and we have no doubt that they will perform the delicate function with elegance and propriety. But they will not add to the sum of England's learning because they are fellows of the same Academy, and though they will do no harm whatever, it is difficult to see how they will achieve much good.

At the same time, we hope

the new Academy will not prove an evil example. By its establishment the thirst for authority should be already assuaged. No injury is done to history or philology by public recognition, because these pursuits, being scientific in their tendency, are also positive in their results. But literature is a delicate plant, which defies the common laws of culture. To restrict it by law would be to destroy its character, for the arts, alone of human enterprises, thrive best in a tempered anarchy. And what else would an Academy of Letters accomplish than restrict its members? The example of France is not encouraging. Though the French are more obedient than ourselves to rules, though their language is far more trammelled by taste and tradition than our own, the French Academy has had practically no effect upon French literature. And if it has failed in precept, it has failed also in example. We cannot believe that the chance of a *fauteuil* ever stimulated a young writer to a praiseworthy effort. The dictionary, upon successive editions of which the Academy has been engaged for some centuries, may always be bought second-hand and unread for a small fraction of its cost. In what, then, are the Academy's energies spent? In intrigue. It is, in brief, the smallest club in Europe, an entry into which is most keenly contested. Though its

members are but forty in number, they are divided into hostile and clearly marked parties, whose division is never inspired by literary taste or prejudice. The most famous of them is the party of the dukes, which even in republican France cannot be taken for a school of letters. The intrigue is harmless enough, and the worst that it does is to taint literature with a somewhat vulgar worldliness. In France, however, it is so old an institution that it would be infamous to disturb it, especially as it has outlived many dynasties. Moreover, although it has generally excluded the greatest men from its guarded circle, although a well-read man will recognise the names of few past Academicians, yet some great ones have honoured the house of Richelieu with their presence, and it has the same savour as an old piece of tapestry or an ancient book. But a Literary Academy established in England would have neither age nor authority. It would confer no dignity, it would enforce no opinion. It would be but another chance for intrigue and log-rolling, and it would lack the compensations which the house of Richelieu affords. Wherefore let us be content with our historians and philologists, who will represent us faithfully in foreign parts, and who will never imperil by word or thought the freedom of English letters.

SPELLBOUND.

THE great dark world is fast asleep,
The keen-eyed stars, like children small,
From out the cloud-drifts peer and peep,
Above the fir masts tall:
The river eddies soft and slow
Beneath the shadowy bridge, as tho'
It feared to wake the drowsy town
When Night has drawn her curtain down.

There's not a restless bird that sings,
There's not a flower lifts its face,
And Silence with mysterious wings
Haunts each familiar place:
The sharp young moon long since has set,
The grasses droop with dewdrops wet,
The elfin wind that stirs the trees
Blows lightly off the dreaming seas.

Weary of toil, the fever'd Day
Has flung himself upon his bed,
And Night comes down the twilight way
With poppy-crownèd head:
Earth, at her presence passing sweet,
Slumbers enchanted at her feet,
Till Day, to vigorous life new born,
Springs up the highways of the Dawn!

CHRISTIE

THE BOERS.

BY L.

NOTHING more momentous can happen to a household than the arrival of a new-born son and brother. The departure of an old member into the gloom of death is clear and fathomable in comparison, though it appears mysterious enough, often, with a haze of tears quivering between the vanishing one and they who must stand with outstretched hands watching him melt upwards or downwards into the incorruptible. But at any rate his work is done. Whatever of good or ill for the family fortunes was in him to do has been done, and the sad or joyous arithmetic of retrospect can sum it up easily enough. But this child, so unexpected though long expected (the whole house in which a soul is created seems surprised, as if a body only had been reckoned on), is an infinity-sign of such tremendous significance that the mild-dreaming mother, the father with his high hopes for it, are wont to wrench themselves out of the future with something of that desperation which invades him trying to conceive the distance of a star. The little symbol of futurity is more comfortable as a present. Futurity is always a pain, an oppression even to those before whom it dances lightest. What though the fate of our House, of our Nation, nay, of the world

itself, may lie in the moist, pink little fist impotently clutching at its first enemy, the air. Our ranks are stronger by a body, our councils by a mind, our balance-credit with Heaven by a soul; unto us a son is given, as precious and precarious as to-day, portent though he be of however tremendous a to-morrow.

The British Empire, a mild-dreaming mother in spite of her skill-at-arms, has long been in labour of the Boers. Three centuries and a quarter has she carried them beneath her heart, since the day when Drake in his hundred-ton death-trap "ran hard aboard the Cape" and found it "the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth." He would have been thought a bold prophet in those days who saw in this an annunciation; and small wonder, for the great mother herself was only just beginning to know her mission of maternity. But the world knows more about her now, and were South Africa still an unborn land, how many would be the winks and nudgings amongst the nations, if, as occurred in 1591, "three British ships sailed into Table Bay and traded with the Natives"! "Another," they would murmur, half in anger, half in relief, wholly in envy, "still another!" And they would in their various ways fall

down and worship the great mother of sons: this one with obscene caricatures and cartoons; that with telegrams made on the Nuremberg toy principle, which having whizzed forward, whizz back to the manipulator in a very astonishing, painful, and amusing manner; a third with columns of heavy-lead headings upon yellow paper, with phonetic distortions of the great mother's very own ancient printed language, most fitly read in the whine of a beaten Hindoo, most fitly punctuated with expectoration of which no other race of men is the master. In the old days these worshippers used to try and kill the mother before her child was born—an intelligible and even heroic effort, productive of many glorious fights; but, again, the world knows more about her now, and leaves her to give birth in peace.

In this way she has brought forth the Boers, with what pain and trouble they only partially know who know only the agony of the last three years. That was practically nothing, a sigh of actual relief went up from South Africa when it began, for what matter the manner of the end of three hundred years of distress? "A thorn in our side" the Boers have been called; if so, how welcome the gash of the operation that relieves us of them. But though a mother may in her anguish so call the child that is in her, when the pain is ended, when peace is in the house and in the mind, when she has a son, is there any thought in all the world more

pathetic than her sorrowful remembrance of her groaning, perhaps cursing at the infinite blessing in her bosom?

Young nations are the children of the world; and with children, whatever vices they are born with are ineradicable—only their virtues are destructible. The eye of the parent must therefore turn first with unspeakable anxiety to the flaws slowly appearing on the negative of his offspring's character as it develops under the unalterable action of the acids of existence. Photography is a true image of the creation of life, with its half-and-half of voluntariness and involuntariness. No man need call upon God or the Sun to create for him; but having called, who shall control what these uncontrollables may deal out to him? And flaws there will be, both upon young child and young nation—ineradicable, none the less, because to the eye they can be botched up and hidden. Young lives, moreover, are not like photographs—only to be looked on. They must move, like engines, must be battered, like the face of an anvil, must be strained, like the cable of an anchor; so that flaws are no mere artistic defect, but an actual danger.

Those who know the Boers and know the British have looked with a sort of panic upon the recently established relations of the two. From no love of throwing cold water, but from a very real disgust of warm oil, have many thinking men muttered to themselves

in the writer's hearing, "*Timeo Danaos et Mauser ferentes!*" An incredible thing has happened. For three hundred years St George, on sovereigns and elsewhere, has been tilting at the Dragon; three years have apparently sufficed to make the scaly creature look humbly up and lick his face! For millions of years *toxicon* has fought with *antidoton* in every vein of every organism of creation — wet with dry, black with white, fool with wise, right with wrong. But south of the tropic of Cancer the two have suddenly wed — to flow, chuckles the British nation, amicably along for ever. It may be so. God grant that it is so. The world is ripe for another miracle: there has not been one vouchsafed since, in that very land, Brobdignag, cowering before Liliput, protested to the world that it was a noble spectacle, and got himself believed. But we must bear well in mind that it is a miracle, and be grateful or incredulous according to our temperaments.

The Boer nation was brought forth in disorder, and suckled on revolt. Government was its first enemy, as the air is the human infant's, and, like the latter, it fought it sturdily from the very moment of emergence from the womb of time, as ignorant as the babe that the new and detestable medium was the very essence of life. Its earliest stratum was ill soil for constitutionalism. The first Boers were sailors and soldiers, ever the most ungovernable of men as they are

the most governed; sailors, "beggars of the sea," with other flotsam and jetsam of the Dutch East India Company, thrown overboard from the great, rich, corrupt galiot, to sink or swim as they might. These wastrels, who must have been the sturdiest vagrants who ever lived, fought the Kaffirs, wrestled with the soil and the climate, and picked their wives from cargoes of Dutch beggar-girls, sent over by the unspeakable Council of Seventeen from Amsterdam for the purpose. Nothing more curious than this transaction has ever occurred in the history of mankind. It is a thousand pities that no old Flemish artist has preserved the scene in the Amsterdam Council Chamber for us,—the seventeen citizens, sitting frigid and fish-eyed around the board, their stiff and formal habiliments bursting with purity and the loot of the world, debating gutturally upon a scheme whereby their fellow-men, shock-haired and half-savage on the distant African seaboard, might be induced to breed for the advantage of the Directorate. What in the female line could be best spared from stock?

Oh for an echo of the tone, a shadowy revisitation of the look and gesture, probably a whisper, and a thumb pointed furtively over a fat shoulder, of him who dared to suggest the orphan asylums! But what, when one has got over the stock-yard callousness of the thing, more sensible than the driving together of two herds of non-producers for production? And

the excitement under Table Mountain when the stumpy vessels, so pregnant with the future, cast anchor in the fresh, blue surges of the bay! Surely no cargo was ever so looked for, or its unshipment less delayed by bills of lading or other formalities! Poor girls, one would give something too for snatches of the talk upon those crowded decks when the anchors fell. A grey chapter ended, of what colour that which was about to begin? The old mountain was answering as they looked at him with their sober, Friesland eyes, streaks of sunlit emerald and of gloomy purple on his flanks, his summit hidden from view, a thousand miles high for all they knew. They fared happily enough. The strong rough arms which received them proved a gentler prison than the cold walls of the Dutch asylums, and they seem to have wound themselves most placidly around the turbulent hearts that beat between. They bore many and tall sons. But men who have fought with all the laws of Europe, and with most of those of nature, as had these weedings of Europe's crimp-shops, the earliest Cape Colonists, do not beget docility, however meek-eyed the motherhood. The second generation of Boers looked out upon the world with the same fierce and mutinous gaze as their sires, dissatisfied with everything, even with the rich land they tilled and planted so assiduously. The reinforcements of wastrels who drifted yearly from Holland found Table Bay a haven of somewhat familiar

unrest, and any philosopher amongst them must have had many thoughts anent the experiment of emptying the sediment of a civilised continent on to a corner of an uncivilised. But one day a cargo of something better than sediment arrived, in the shape of 300 French Protestants fleeing for the sake of God from the devil who occupied the throne of Europe. No king and no kept woman ever consigned a more unconsidered or more portentous shipment to futurity than did Louis XIV. and de Maintenon when they chased these 300 aboard ship. These Frenchmen, many of them highborn, nearly all skilful in some art or craft, were welcomed by the amorphous little community farming and fuming under the Van der Stells, intermarried with it, gave it stability and respectability, and finally, apparently, disappeared into it, birth, language, and all, like a glass of French wine poured into a vat of Flemish ale. But never was liquor more surely and irretrievably "doctored" than the heavy stuff within the vat. To-day few Boers but have French blood in their veins, and men with French names commanding them in action. Botha was *Bota*, Grobelaar was *Colbert*, Viljoen was *Villions*, Boshof was *Beau Cerf*, Pienaar was *Pinards*; Joubert, Fouché, de Villiers, Celliers, as purely French in name as they were in courage and energy in battle.

The Huguenots brought more with them than arts and vivacity—they brought the stern

religion which had lost them their native land. It, too, sank deeply into the new soil; its sternness became intensified in the stern men who received it; its fervour hardened to bigotry; its belief to superstition; its purity to that which could sanctify even fornication with a text. Much they brought indeed to the all-lacking Dutch riffraff which absorbed them, but they brought no docility or constitutionalism. That would have been a strange commodity in the baggage of men whose only acquaintance with laws and constitutions was with those of Louis XIV. They too had been reared amid peril and unrest; all the Europe they had escaped was one huge swirling maelstrom of lawlessness, blood, and death. In no age and in no place have Frenchmen been prone to placidity and lawfulness,—all their triumphs and all their failures have been due to the predominance of qualities totally contrary to these. These Huguenots, to be short, stamped upon the already unrestful sailor and soldier character the traits of vigorous unrest which have made South African history; and the chiefest of these, when grafted, grew, like their religion, distorted upon its new stem. Love of liberty became a passion for licence; a craving for just law gave place to a fierce resolution to have no law at all save that which every master might think fit to promulgate within the four walls of his own house. And this

differed exceedingly from the codes selected for their regulation, firstly by the unspeakable seventeen of Amsterdam, and later by the cuff-and-collar noblemen from St James's Square, much as these differed from each other. Neither the "butt-end of a musket"¹ of the former nor the well-trimmed admonitory forefinger of the latter were governmental insignia at all venerable to those enemies of all government, the governed. The early Boer loved to trade; the Dutch East India soon pounced upon a practice so demoralising to its own paramountcy as the raising of produce for the best, but an indiscriminate market. The later Boer loved to own slaves. The white, well-trimmed finger, curled this time around a goose-quill, scratched out *that* little idiosyncrasy with ink as black as the new freedmen, and as indelible as their old masters' conviction of their right to hold them in servitude. The whole Boer nation became feverish with anger, and later, when a consolatory but inadequate cheque came, like a pint of milk amongst a full enteric ward, delirious. The Boers both early and later loved to wander. Both Amsterdam and London forbade him to "roam far afield in the desert and veldt." Enough!

A trader may cease his trade, a slaver may give up the bodies and minister to the souls under his subjection, a rascalion may cling to the law, and a thief take to giving in lieu of

¹ A hundred blows with which was the punishment for grumblers amongst the early community.

taking, but no mortal vagrant can withstand the eternal faint summons of a mighty hinterland calling "Come! come!" just outside his fence all day and all night. The Boers made little effort to withstand it, but faded out into the silence and immensity in big and little groups,—sometimes in solitude, but always moving northwards with women and waggons, a Bible, a rifle, sundry sheep and cattle, drawing deep breaths as men do who come out of the shaft of a mine on to a breezy cliff by the sea. "Stay!" commanded the scandalised noblemen at Cape Town, writing hastily reports and proclamations,—the former for Downing Street, the latter to be forwarded, with a flag, to the farthest outposts of the radiating laagers of waggons out on the Karroo and beyond. It is a tremendous and overpowering privilege which belongs to a British subject, that of remaining always a British subject—one capable of much discussion, and quite conceivably unbearable even to a man of British birth, much less to one of no birth at all. But the hinterland grew vaster and more insistent at each advance. "Come!" it called, all its solitude and wide free spaces making music like the Pied Piper before the infant nation which trailed after. The bearers of flags and proclamations began to arrive too late, so did the "pain-of-death-and-confiscation" edicts in their pockets. You cannot execute a man unless you know where he is; and it is difficult to

sequester property which, when last seen by human eye a month ago, was travelling at three miles an hour "towards the tropic of Cancer." Much of this property was never seen by human eye again. Dingaan the Zulu, and Moselekatse the Matabele, too, entertained a dislike to the spectacle of white men wandering northwards, and their legions of truculent giants soon showed the agitated British satrap down at Government House the only true way of arresting a Boer trek. Slaughter, fever, starvation, murdered and outraged women, babies writhing wildly on assegai-points—this was for long the history of the pioneers; but they dribbled forward nevertheless, smothering all obstacles with an advance-guard of dead, as the moving millions of lemurs do in their migrations in Norway. Such colossal patience and endurance as those of these stern-faced riflemen who rode ahead and alongside the line of waggons are unique in history. Such revenge as they wreaked when the tide turned, and the black regiments were dashed to pieces before them, is happily also unique. The assegai'd white babies writhed less horribly than the little mounds of black living flesh lighted with mealie straw and roasting outside the blazing kraals. *Lex talionis*,—it was the only law they recognised. A terrible book is Deuteronomy; a terrible race were the Boers of the 'Thirties and 'Forties.

Then the flags and proclama-

tions caught them up again, this time in Natal, still always inimical, never with healing on their wings, but ever demanding, ordering, threatening something exactly the reverse of that chosen by the Boers for themselves. The latter made a new State, a new Volksraad, a new and very fierce war with their old enemy Dingaan, and in January 1841 propounded a treaty with the British Government, praying for independence, on terms. But even whilst Pretorius, or his clerk, was painfully scrawling the conditions, the insincerity and impossibility of them were being made manifest on every side. *Item*, Ownership of slaves was not to be permitted; yet every farmer possessed a dozen, and was adding to them as occasion offered. *Item*, No hostile movements would be made against the natives. At that very moment a ravaging, burning commando was cantering about, with black men tied to the saddle-bows and columns of raided cattle alongside, on the wrong side of the borders of Pondoland. *Item*, The Boers would see that civilisation was spread amongst the natives. The bloody and treacherous murder of Dingaan's hapless envoys was a bad beginning to that line of business. The answer of the British Government was brief and monotonous. "You are British subjects—as such behave." The reply of the Boers was war, the first war with England, Smith *v.* Pretorius, a suit which has been tried more than once since. Smith, after a very bad time of it, eventually

won; the Boers dispersed, declared themselves British subjects, and promptly trekked. More chasing by flag and proclamation, even to the banks of the Limpopo; more trouble, an infinity of it, with black men, brown men, and white men. War with Griquas, with Bantus of all tribes, internal quarrels, repudiation of the Smith *v.* Pretorius adjudication, unlimited thefts of cattle, slaughtering, and slave-driving, with its inevitable outcome, another British war, and a good round licking from another British Smith, a war-worn, blasphemous old hero, somewhat surprised, as many another old soldier has been since, at the stoutness of the Burgher in the field. More trekking, an interlude of quiet, and then, almost miraculously, arising as suddenly and unaccountably as its own dust-devils, up sprang the South African Republic, free and independent, with the Vaal river as its southern, inviolable frontier, and with nothing else definite about it. The early history of the new nation is instructive. In 1854 Potgieter, a prominent Dutchman, was flayed alive by the Kaffirs. *Lex talionis* assessed his value in black flesh as 900 to be killed by the bullet and 2000 to be slain by thirst within a cavern, which was duly carried out. In 1856 slavery, under the title of apprenticing, was again legalised by the Volksraad; and in 1858 the natives were officially scheduled as lacking souls. From 1867 to 1877 the country was bankrupt; all the native nations on its borders,

infuriated by the unceasing slave-raids and their bloody accompaniments of slain women and babies and burning kraals, were ready to fall upon the little island of white men in their midst; internal law and order were dead, and the South African Republic was during these ten years the most miserable State that ever existed upon earth. But the hated British flag and proclamation appeared again, this time in Pretoria itself; the country was annexed, saved, and infuriated at its salvation. But with safety came the saddest time of all. There is no doubt that when for the first time we governed the Boer nation we misgoverned it, and that because we misunderstood it. Space is too limited to recount the multitudinous differences which led to the open breach of 1881. Let it suffice that the feelings of the Boers towards us, which had never before been anything more than incompatibility of temper, and the old antagonism of childish wilfulness with wisdom, were deepened to hatred, their trust in our word transformed to an immovable belief that we were a nation of liars, their respect for our arms to contempt. Never did tall talk and small performance operate more disastrously. The Boers were men who judged by results alone, as half-savage men are wont to do. We promised and did not perform; we threatened and did not punish; we went to war and did not win; we invoked the sun and the rivers to attest our im-

movability, and moved. And to the Boer mind ever since we have been a nation of unjust, impotent braggarts.

It is a bitter reflection that the long war just concluded may not have removed the whole of this impression. When the despised and hated conquer, it is their arms alone that win respect. Is the heart of France any warmer towards Germany, or that of Poland to Russia? The antagonism of the Boers to British rule is more deeply rooted than either of these, and it would be a wonder indeed if defeat has plucked it up. Let us face the facts: the Boers have hated and despised us, they have risked their all to fling us from their midst, to ward off the very touch of our hand. They have failed, and the dreaded hand is upon them for ever. What, then, may we expect?

Our hope must lie more in the youthfulness of the Boer nation than in the characteristics of its present individual members. The latter are, it is to be feared, irreconcilable. They live in the past, and the past holds nothing for them but anger and distrust. No single one of our transactions with them has been of a joyful or friendly nature, not one but has seemed to them dishonest, oppressive, or cowardly. It is symptomatic of the unreasoning complacency which is almost our national disease, that this gloomy past is considered to have been rose-lighted by a wasting war. It has been lighted, indeed, but

with no rose-tinted lamps,—rather, to the Boer eye, with the red glare of the conflagration which has consumed all his hopes to ashes. We, who have conquered, may comfortably forget the past, because in conquering we have won the future. But to the beaten Boer there is no future worth winning,—how can there be to a man for whom the future can hold nothing but the antitheses of his ideals? “You will become great and famous,” says his new-found British brother. The Boer is silent, because during all his years he has prayed for obscurity. And what is progress to a man whose earnest wish was to stand still, or riches to one who dreads and despises them, or imperial citizenship to an anchorite whose share even in the primitive government of his republic was oppressive to him?

But the Boer nation will be, nevertheless, the most malleable and conformable of units in the Imperial scheme. For it is no nation at all, nor has ever been. It is a tribe, with the mission and fate of all tribes, to be absorbed and regulated and lined up in the ranks of civilisation in spite of itself. And as with all tribes, the love of isolation, which seems so necessary to itself whilst still an undisturbed community, will disappear utterly on the disappearance of the last tribal generation, and leave not a trace behind. Thirty years hence the

Boers will scarcely understand why their fathers leapt to arms in defence of nothing; fifty years and it will be a tale. And it is to be hazarded that no postponement of the war, for however long a period, would have altered matters to our detriment. The Boers, so far from becoming a nation under Kruger's régime, were ceasing even to be a tribe. And in thirty years they would probably have become British subjects automatically, had not the misconduct of their *olla podrida* of a Government made war inevitable, and forced a natural process to develop in a tenth of its proper time.

It is during the next three decades, therefore, that it will behove us to walk circumspectly with the hand of infant Boerdom in our own. Whither we lead him he will walk, a suspicious child, but a docile and eventually a trustful one. His father, if we know the Boer, will remain silent, will not interfere, though he hate us utterly to the last. There is much of the fatalist in his character; he knows as well as we do that his creed of retrogression is a monstrosity upon earth. He knows better than we do that it is dead. Kismet! He has yielded; stout man that he is, we can love him though never a grain of love shall we get in return. And it is not until he has passed away that the British Empire will be able to say truly, Unto us a son is born.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXLIV.

OCTOBER 1902.

VOL. CLXXII.

MERE CHILDREN IN FINANCE.

No imputation is more resented by those to whom it is most directly applicable than that of incompetence in commercial matters. The brigand of society is well aware of this peculiarity, and finds his account in it, exploiting the vanity which is its foundation to its very utmost capacity. And so long as their respective classes exist, the country parson will be the victim of the bucket-shop keeper, and the retired army man will sink his pension in poultry-farming. A member of either class who professes ignorance of finance is probably a company-promoter in embryo, or an illegitimate manipulator of feathered fowl. In the vast majority of cases the innocent is vain of his business capacity in proportion to his ignorance, and sensitive to the last degree on such a matter. Hence Mr Cecil Rhodes's post-

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humous appreciation, expressing as it did the feelings of most people acquainted with collegiate finance during the last twenty years, has fluttered the dovecots hardly less than Mr Kipling's famous jingle of nine months ago. The number of persons affronted is indeed less; but their marked claims to consideration on the ground of intellectual capacity must render them peculiarly sensitive to the charge made against them. The fellows (or, to use the modern periphrasis, the governing body) of a college distinguished for a century past by intellect and learning, men having the management of an estate of some £10,000 a-year, are told explicitly that they are mere children in financial affairs. The statement is devoid of bitterness or animus. The very man who makes it gives

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them with the same breath a fortune to spend: he does not fetter their choice of investments; he simply tells them that they *are* children, and recommends them to seek counsel from those less learned but more astute. And the kindness of the gift and the advice is emphasised by the fact that both are bestowed on a college to which the donor owed but little, in a university which had not been unanimous in honouring him.

Can the allegation be true? can the £500,000 a-year (speaking roughly) of which the collegiate governing bodies at Oxford and Cambridge have the disposal be really in the hands of children? And if so, why has this great estate not crumbled away and disappeared, as is the wont of the estates of prodigals and fools? The point is one of national importance: if Mr Rhodes's estimate be generally true (and there is no reason to suppose that other governing bodies are less cloistral and more mundane than that of Oriel), then we have a glaring instance of the abandonment of what is really a public estate of great value to the capricious management of bookish amateurs. Our parochial charities, our school endowments, our ecclesiastical funds, have all been placed under the management of persons who are, presumably at least, able to devote their whole time to their administration. Only the great revenues of our colleges are left to the discretion of a body of

men who become every year less and less able to control them, and from whom the country demands that their lives shall be more and more devoted to education and research, occupations not incompatible with total ignorance of affairs.

If this be so, then a vast change has taken place during the last sixty or seventy years. Before that time college estates were in many cases known as models of accurate and intelligent personal management. But that a great change has occurred is known to those who are acquainted with the facts of the internal history of the universities during the last half-century. These facts are, however, little known to the general public, to whom the retention of ancient names and offices implies as a rule a continuity of administration which may have been thoroughly destroyed. A brief statement will show how far this destruction has gone.

Up to the time of the first University Commission (say 1854) the fellows of colleges at Oxford and Cambridge were numbered by their hundreds. Of 542 at Oxford, New College had 70, St John's 50, and Christ Church its famous 101. Three-fourths of the classical firsts of the five years included in 1845-49, and one-third of the classical seconds within that time, obtained fellowships. These men constituted a class which has now completely disappeared. Elected in many cases to their fellowships practically while yet schoolboys, attached to their college for life

so long as they remained unmarried, with a real stake in its prosperity and an income varying with its fortunes, they gave to their *alma mater* in innumerable cases a lifelong devotion. That so many of them ceased to reside in Oxford after taking their degree was rather an advantage to the foundations than otherwise. Scattered throughout the country and throughout the empire,—bar-risters, journalists, civil servants, travellers, men of affairs,—they could, when summoned to the councils of their respective colleges, import a knowledge of business and an acute appreciation of outside opinion which was invaluable. They kept the universities in touch with the world. More than this, many of them were of a class which is now hardly represented at either academic centre: the obsolete and absurd arrangement which crowded the college muniment-rooms with pedigrees, and admitted to learned foundations for which their intellectual acquirements did not always absolutely qualify them the most distant relatives of this or that pious founder, had at least one singular and striking advantage,—it introduced to college councils country-bred men, sons of country gentlemen and yeomen, whose practical knowledge and acuteness in all things agricultural furnished a much-needed help in that estate management which was thereafter to become so terrible a danger to the colleges. As a rule these men waited, perhaps a score of years, working for

the college all the time, for a valuable living, and took it. They were not always model parish priests (though some emphatically were so), but they were not children in finance, and they were first-rate farmers. The late Mr Mozley in his 'Reminiscences' draws a harrowing picture of one of these "close fellows" trotting up and down library steps in obedience to the directions of a person who afterwards became a not over-illustrious dean. Had this same man been set to lay out occupation-roads and settle the value of lifeholds, he might possibly have left behind him a reputation equal to that of "Bursar Lee" or the late Master of Pembroke, Oxford. The college books of no more than fifty years ago show the traces of that infinite capacity for taking trouble which made men like these the architects of what should have been the fortunes of their own colleges. Under this system the rule of celibacy had its distinct advantages. It prevented a man from fixing his penates elsewhere, and made him regard the college as the old home to which his allegiance was first due. Nor was the intercourse between the common-rooms and county society, which was fostered by the character and pursuits of the old-fashioned fellow, without its profitable side. It is well, to say the least, for great landowners whose estates march with one another to be on good terms and able to act together for their common advantage. That such intercourse in any way promoted the intellectual

progress of the universities it is not intended to assert. We are here considering merely the financial question and its developments.

The system of management usual in those days was, regarded from an *a priori* point of view, somewhat of an absurdity. The representative of the college in matters of finance was the bursar, who, in accordance with the worst traditions of democracy, held office for a year only. During this year he was supposed and expected to make what he could out of things, so long as he paid the expenses. Generally he had a small fixed salary in addition. What seems at first a most profligate system of revenue-farming was really rendered harmless by a system of constitutional checks. But in the meantime the perquisites of the bursar were extensive and peculiar. The proceeds of dead or fallen timber was a customary item, and one that could hardly lead to much chicanery. But in some colleges the rule was that if a fellow married during any given year the bursar for that year appropriated the whole of his stipend from the date of the marriage till the expiration of the financial twelvemonth: and legends were rife of the crafty introduction into cloistral life of eligible sisters, cousins, and aunts, by worldly minded bursars, with a view to the entrapping not of the callow bachelor (whose emoluments as fellow often were no more than £40 a-year) but of the

well-dowered doctor of laws or divinity. The exploitation of perquisites was in those days erected into a science. In some colleges an ancient composition for dues gave the head a right to unlimited coal and candle, and in such cases neither gas nor oil ever polluted the atmosphere of the Lodgings. But to return to our bursar: if he were careless or ignorant, an office which in the hands of a skilful man might have been lucrative both to himself and the corporation would assuredly prove a source of disaster to him and to his college. And in course of time it came about quite naturally that a bursar who had shown himself competent during his year of office was re-appointed for years in succession without opposition. Great as his discretion was, his powers were much curtailed by stereotyped methods of keeping accounts, differing widely in different colleges, but immutable as the laws of the Medes in each,—such accounts being yearly submitted to an audit conducted by seniors who had passed the bursarial chair, who were thoroughly acquainted with the system of accounts, and who were keenly alive to innovation or irregularity. Finally, in most colleges, the ultimate direction of policy with regard to the estates rested with a committee composed of the oldest fellows, whose influence, especially in the case of an annual bursar, was very great.

The arrangements of the time strike one as primitive.

For example, the bursar's office or room, being little used for business purposes, was in constant requisition for lectures when such were given, and—being usually a spacious apartment—for occasional breakfast or dinner-parties. But it must be understood that the estates to a large extent managed themselves. A full account of the various and complicated systems upon which college lands were let or delegated would demand more space than is here available; but the two main methods then in vogue may be described as renewable leaseholds and lifeholds. They were the same as those under which, previously to the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission, the bulk of episcopal and capitular estates were administered. Either a nominal rent (quit-rent) was paid from year to year for the lands, and a heavy fine exacted at every septennial renewal of what became practically a perpetual lease, or else a lease on lives was granted in consideration of a very large payment on the spot. This last was neither more nor less than a gambling transaction: it reduced what should have been a fixed and regular annual income to a single and generally inadequate capital payment. The tenant paid a thumping sum for the possession of the lands for the lifetime of himself, his son, and his grandson (perhaps just born), or any other hale and hearty person whom he could induce the college to include in the lease.

He acknowledged the absolute proprietorship of the college by the payment of the trifling quit-rent, but to all intents and purposes the farm he held was without profit to the landowners for the space of those three lives. The thumping sum was, in some cases at least, simply divided among the actual fellows at the time of the bargain. This was bad enough in the case of college property; but there at least it was a corporation, and not an individual, which profited. In the case of episcopal lands such a transaction became the merest gamble, a pitting of the bishop's life against that of his tenants; and scandals arising from this ambiguous and awkward relation were not infrequent.

This was, however, not the rule in college estates. Leases for twenty-one years, renewable (for a fine) every seven years, were customary, and in some cases had been renewed for centuries. The squire had held his "college land" so long that he had bought all round it and in the middle of it, and had come to regard it so much as his own property that—generally having certain covenanted privileges with regard to timber, &c., for repairs—he was wont to spend his money on it as freely as on his own home-farm. He had to pay his fine every few years certainly; but as to the college resuming possession of its own, why, the college, he thought, was much too wise for that. Here was a rental that never varied; a bad season or two produced no

demand for decrease of dues. The bad years could be compensated by a good one or two before the septennial fine came round again. He was satisfied and the college was satisfied: why should any one interfere? An excellent account of this Arcadian arrangement and its collapse was published in one of the last numbers of 'Fraser's Magazine' by a writer who had every claim to be considered an expert in this particular matter.

About the year 1850, with the beginning of that scientific farming which the repeal of the Corn Laws rendered necessary for profit, it occurred to the college authorities that a more remunerative manner of management was possible: the "college land" which the squire had held for so many decades was of great profit to him: why should not the college have its share of that profit? The fact that he had now surrounded it with his own land must give it even a fancy value for him at least: why not end the leases—that is, refuse to accept another fine, and tell him that in fourteen years or more the college would resume possession of the land, which would then be let to him or others at an adequate yearly rent? This was, theoretically, thoroughly sound finance. The main difficulty was how to live in the meantime: the colleges had existed on fines,—

in many instances lands held on such tenures constituted nearly the whole college estate, —and now for many years there were to be no more fines at all. How were the fellows to exist? What had posterity done for them that they should starve for its sake? The position was saved by an elaborate system of loans, duly authorised by Government, and sinking funds. Enough ready money was obtained to carry on the estates and to pay all charges until the happy day of rack-rents should arrive. This was the process, hardly yet concluded, of "running out the leases."

Precisely at the wrong nick of time there stepped in a University Commission. Had the adjustment of the new order of things been left to the old half-academic, half-bucolic societies, however much the outer world might have suffered, the interests of the foundations would have been safeguarded. But the Commissioners dreamed of literary progress and efficiency only. So far as they considered the estates at all, they regarded them merely as a source of inexhaustible and increasing revenue for the future, and in the strength of this proceeded to charge the colleges with the maintenance of numerous professors, whose praise is not exactly written in Thorold Rogers's once famous blue-book.¹ But they did more:

¹ In this remarkable document one regius professor stated that he lectured "once a-year, but not every year." Another lectured (for a few weeks in the year) late on Saturday night and early on Monday morning.

they diminished the number of fellowships throughout the universities by nearly one-half, and fixed the emoluments of those remaining, so that good or bad management of revenue became in future of little or no consequence to their holders. At the same time "close" fellowships (those appropriated to particular localities, schools, or families) were abolished, and the system of admission by competitive examination, which had already begun to make its way in some of the best colleges, was thoroughly established.

From an academic point of view the change was admirable. Financially considered, it was deplorable. On the one hand, that leavening of the tutorial bodies with the best men of the best colleges, which has gone on ever since, then began: and had the change taken place at any other time than one of financial crisis, it might have been an unmixed blessing. But the new competitive fellows were not happy in their new surroundings. Had they been ushered in a body into untenanted college buildings, their stipends provided by the State, they might have made an ideal *Academia* for themselves if not for their pupils. But they found others in possession: the old hands—the country-bred founder's kin, the semi-rural incumbent, the bachelor barrister to whom his college common-room was a week-end refuge and place of refreshment—looked with contempt upon men who did not always know wheat from vetches, and

neither understood nor cared to investigate the mysteries of copyholds and "lives." This contempt was returned with interest by men to whom their books were their world, and a bitterness of feeling was engendered which has found a typical literary expression in Mark Pattison's too famous volume of depreciations. The habits of the old common-room frequenters were distasteful to the new men, and the old stagers were apt to exaggerate them, with a view to shocking the neophyte. There was war: the distinguished man of letters above referred to is credited with having deliberately destroyed college betting-books going back to the reign of Charles I.—surely an invaluable record of manners and opinions—on account of the grossness of some of the wagers recorded in them. The worst result, however, was that some of the juniors withdrew themselves altogether from any but internal college business, and left estate management to those whose bucolic intellect they considered better fitted for the task. But the bucolics were not immortal, and their removal left the inexperienced students face to face with a financial crisis, the tiding over of which demanded special business capacity.

Stipends were not, after all, a matter of cheques from above; and the new professors had to be paid out of alleged surplus college revenues. Thus, although the period was one of surpassing agricultural prosperity compared with that

through which the later generation of "children in finance" have had to pass, desperate measures were resorted to. The running out of the leases, once begun, could not be stopped; and what are technically termed "unauthorised loans" (a somewhat misleading name) were freely contracted, sometimes at high rates of interest: even the college plate was occasionally mortgaged for this purpose. These financial difficulties brought to the front a few naturally gifted experts in administration; but the majority of the "fifties and sixties," as they were called in malcontent Oxford circles a few years ago, were bookish men, *Stubengelehrten* of a pronounced type, and agreed on one point only, a virulent hatred of the old system. This feeling they termed Liberalism, and for many years it was accepted at their valuation. From 1870 to 1883 they were practically the arbiters of the financial policy of the colleges, and in the latter year the amount of loans ("authorised" and "unauthorised") for which those colleges were liable was, at Oxford alone, over £500,000. At Cambridge the amount is undiscoverable, owing to the peculiar form in which the college accounts, as regulated by the Commissioners, are cast.

Before, however, their *régime* had had time to produce its full results, good or bad, the new University Commission began its iconoclastic career. It is not our purpose here to

deal with the internal revolution affected by the ordinances of this Commission. That it made of an "ordinary" fellow a person whose interest in the college of which he is nominally a constituent member—rarely that in which he has received his academic training and to which his academic affections may be supposed to turn—may be estimated precisely at £1400 spread over a period of seven years, does not concern this discussion. That the new official fellow is a more or less jovial paterfamilias, dwelling in parks or avenues, appearing punctually at the porter's lodge at 9.30 A.M. with a little black bag, and emerging therefrom with his day's work done at 1.30 P.M., considering his pupils as paying clients and the college buildings a comfortable office, is a fact that does concern us, for it is from this class that the managers of estates worth hundreds of thousands yearly are supposed to be selected. Even more portentous from a financial point of view is it that the last Commission stolidly ignored the rapid decrease of agricultural revenues, and in defiance of all economics burdened colleges already struggling for their very existence with the maintenance of highly paid professorships. The state of things brought about by this Commission is such that public attention should be called to the facts.

It should be premised that, unlike foundations of modern growth, the colleges of Oxford

and Cambridge draw their income almost entirely from agricultural land. A few Oxford colleges have town building estates: All Souls' at Harrow, Queen's at Southampton, Christ Church and St John's in Oxford itself. But the vast bulk of their revenues are derived directly from the land: and this is still more the case at Cambridge. Now the administration of landed estates, small or great, at the present day demands nothing less than expert knowledge. Under the old *régime* at both universities such knowledge was generally to be found among the existing members of the corporations themselves. How far it is available at present may be judged from the facts hereafter to be stated. At present the chief financial officer of a college retains the ancient name of bursar, but in most cases his functions are now divided: he no longer interferes with internal, or, as one might say, household expenditure, which is delegated to an officer variously known as "internal" bursar, "house steward," or the like. And such an officer, if at all competent, is invaluable to the corporation he serves. He is *ex hypothesi* a gentleman, and not open to the temptation of bribes and "commissions," which corrupt the staff of most great establishments. The recent scandals at Cambridge might have been avoided if such an official had been deputed to deal with cooks and butchers in place of a lecturer

in mathematics, whose external bursarial duties might well be supposed to demand all the time he could spare from his tutorial functions. It is, however, with these external duties that we have now to deal.

Until within the last few years the estates bursar was almost invariably a fellow of the college he represented. That is to say, he was a person who at the age of two-and-twenty had been elected, after examination, for proficiency purely literary. Even the new statutes, though they enlarge the range of qualifications for election to fellowships without examination, do not include financial capacity among those qualifications. Our literary man after a few years finds lecturing irksome: possibly his pupils share his feelings in the matter. What is to be done with him? He is liked in college: his family is popular: it would be hard on them to turn him adrift on the world. Make him bursar. The intellectual side of his character having been tried and found wanting, it is probable that so good a man must have capacities on the material side. Therefore intrust the college finances to him—a matter only of some £15,000 or £20,000 a-year. The salary is good even for a married man: there is plenty of open-air work: he'll soon learn; and if he is dull, there is So-and-so the bailiff, who knows all the ropes, and he will keep him straight. Such was the *raison d'être* of many appointments.

The resulting inconveniences were great. The bursar as a member of the governing body was only in a very limited sense its servant. His duties were only traditionally defined, and when, as occasionally happened, his legal status was called in question in courts of law, it was very difficult in the absence of documents to say exactly what his powers of dealing, *e.g.*, with floating balances, might be. But even worse than this was the lack of professional qualification. The acute British farmer soon discovered that he had no longer to deal with the long-headed "squarson" of the older times, but with a mere tyro in matters agricultural—and what the British farmer can accomplish in the way of chicanery under such circumstances only those who must deal with him can know. The complaints of the country gentleman were loud and deep. Lands adjoining his own—like his own, in every agricultural particular the same—were being let at half their market price, and pulling down his own rental year by year. The county of Norfolk even now re-echoes with such lamentations. And even where rents were not unduly forced down, the amount extorted for repairs and rebuildings was immense. The policy, begun in the years of prosperity, of throwing many small holdings into one great farm, with a view to comprehensive and scientific cultivation, had still to be carried out, and the expenditure thereby necessitated

was large indeed. New and up-to-date buildings had everywhere to be erected, and the literary bursar was not one who could stem expenditure as one who knows. One example will suffice here. In one Oxford College with an agricultural rent-roll of £10,000 a-year the expenditure on estates—repairs, not buildings, for those were already there, erected at enormous expense—from 1878 to 1889—eleven years—was £70,000. But this was not all: one natural feature of this system was the tendency of the academic bursar to commit all practical management of the estates to the charge of bailiffs, men of low origin but great experience, who exploited their position for all it was worth, and when this was accomplished occasionally absconded with all the ready money they could lay hands on. It may seem incredible to the outside public that mere underlings of this class should have had the practical disposal of the thousands which passed through their hands; but the bitter experiences of at least one college, some twelve years ago, taught others what the natural consequences of their indolent system might and probably would be, and a change was made.

The change has amounted to this: as a rule the bursar is no longer a fellow, no longer a person elected for literary attainments, but a real hired servant of the college. In a few instances actual fellows who have shown their capacity

continue to perform their bursarial duties, and do so with marked success. But they are men of the older generation described above, and after them there can be no successor like unto them. University Commissions have killed their class. The bursar is now as a rule selected from the large body of country-bred men—younge sons and the like—whose experience and far from despicable talents are at the disposal of all owners of large properties who desire to be relieved of responsibility. In some instances the services of such men are invaluable. Furthermore, their legal status, their powers, and their responsibilities are now generally accurately defined, with a view to the avoidance of the legal difficulties indicated above. And, lastly, in most cases a substantial guarantee, either personal or backed by an insurance company, is required by the college from an officer through whose hands such large sums of money must pass. But the whole of these advantages are neutralised by the fact that except in the pettiest details the bursar is liable to have his hand held or forced by a committee of the college he serves. It is here that the children in financial matters have their innings. The idiosyncrasies—not to use a harder term—of a College Estates Committee can only be appreciated by those who have been members of such a body. The mere situation of the estates is often unknown to many of the fellows: the relative value of farms in differ-

ent localities and on different soils is a mystery to them: while the crudest theories of rent and of co-operative farming are from time to time propounded for acceptance by men whose sole knowledge of economics is derived from undigested manuals or superficial diatribes in the magazines. And it is ultimately with men of this type—honourable indeed and upright, but in no sense men of business—that the disposal of half a million of annual revenue rests, and must rest until other order be taken. Is there any other nation in the world in which such a state of things would be tolerated?

Such a system is grossly unfair to the bursar, who is presumably of like passions with other men. He is managing estates for a body of men who may quite conceivably neither know nor care anything about those estates; who regard the committee meetings, which should instruct them and help him, as an undesirable appendage to tutorial work; who do not know their own tenants by sight, and would be at a loss to converse with them intelligently if they did. As a servant of a private landowner he would at least be responsible to a master who knew his lands and could judge of a tenant's grievances or claims if necessary. Here he is under no such checks: and that financial scandals have not occurred more often than they have through a bursar's abuse of his position is due to the Providence which has in most cases made him an honest man.

But his powers for mischief are very great indeed—and those powers should not exist.

The foregoing statements may seem to be strongly put. The reader can judge for himself if they are exaggerated by the most superficial examination of the "University and College Accounts" annually published in accordance with the Commissioners' directions since 1884. Of the many items contained therein, it is of course only those referring to estates' management which bear upon the subject here discussed, and the figures are sufficiently striking. We will take first the question, above alluded to, of excessive expenditure on repairs and improvements: it is here that the greatest tendency to extravagance and even speculation may be expected, owing to causes already explained. Now it should always be remembered that as the "beneficial leases"—the lifeholds and the like—fell in, the expenditure demanded was very great. Holders of such expiring leases were content to patch up old buildings so as to satisfy the merest requirements of their covenants; and in many cases when the leases fell in whole ranges of sheds, and even dwelling-houses, had to be pulled down, and others erected in their stead. But this expenditure should of course have obviated the necessity for repairs in bulk for many years to come, and it would be expected that the disbursements under this head would have gradually reduced themselves—at all events from

1885, when the beneficial leases had all but expired, until the present time. What are the facts? King's College, Cambridge, had an "external" revenue in 1884 of nearly £35,000. It should be understood that this "external" revenue includes impropriated tithe, ground-rents, royalties, quit-rents, and other items (sometimes amounting to more than one-half of the whole section), which do not necessitate expenditure for repairs. This external revenue at King's had diminished in 1889 to £29,600. Yet the repairs item, which in 1884 was £4166, stood in 1889 at £4222, and in 1895 had reached £4604. The total expenditure under this head from 1884 to 1899 was £63,118, and the average nearly £4000 a-year—twelve per cent on income. To this must be added, according to the accounts, some £1800 a-year for "management," which would bring the total up to eighteen per cent on external revenue. Deducting the tithe, quit-rents, and the like from this external revenue, we should have an expenditure of wellnigh thirty per cent on administration; but this may not be quite fair, collection of tithe rent-charge being in some cases heavily paid for. Clare, whose external revenue has fallen from £11,500 to £10,400, yet shows an increase under "repairs" from £1007 to £1399. Christ's, reduced from £11,500 to £9417, yet spends £1603 in place of £1119. Caius, on the other hand, with an apparent in-

crease of revenue from £13,700 to £16,600, has diminished expenditure by one-fifth, which is as it should be. Colleges with estates of under £10,000 a-year can hardly be fully considered here. Turning to Oxford, we find Corpus, with an external income diminished in the sixteen years from £17,506 to £12,047, yet increasing "repairs" disbursements from £848 to £2540. Jesus, with almost exactly the same revenue in 1884 and 1900, expends more by £900 a-year (£1477 as against £565). Oriel, declining in income from £11,379 to £9870, has yet increased outlay from £1707 to £2069. Nor is the University of Oxford itself in much better plight: with a rent-roll diminished from £11,496 to £10,645, it yet spends £1598 on repairs and improvements instead of £815. Magdalen, Merton, Brasenose, and All Souls' have increased their revenues so greatly that a startling increase in "repairs and improvements" (£13,642 for the three colleges, as against £4698) may possibly be justified.

A far worse side of college finance might be revealed in respect of the borrowing of trust funds for purposes of ordinary expenditure. In some cases such temporary appropriations are duly noticed in the published accounts, but in other instances the funds have been quietly annexed, the college merely paying over what is nominally income from investments to the beneficiaries. The unfriendly critic might suggest

that the college which does this is placing itself in a position not very different from that of the embarrassed solicitor who "invests" his clients' money in his own business, and pays over "dividends" scrupulously till the crash comes. One result of this has certainly been that some trust funds have disappeared entirely—of course without any evil intent on the part of the almost unconscious appropriators. They have been, as the churchwarden said of the thirty pounds he could not account for, "mommled away." Of such innocent malversation Mr Rhodes's own college, a few years ago, presented the world with an instructive spectacle.

For many years lovers of architecture sallying forth from Oxford on the eastern side have turned with pain from the contemplation of a building of ancient date and obviously ecclesiastical in character, no less obviously at present, where not ruinous, converted to purposes very secular indeed. Around this building were certain picturesque little tenelements of the seventeenth century—erected indeed to replace others destroyed during the siege—now simply cowsheds. These buildings were no less than the Chapel and Hospital of St Bartholomew near Oxford, dating from the reign of Henry I.—never suppressed, never appropriated, but placed for their better management under the control of the provost and fellows of Oriel by King Edward III. As usual, the original provision for twelve

brethren and a chaplain (who was also master) has proved inadequate. It had consisted mainly of a small fee-farm rent, but after the annexation to Oriel a number of small benefactions were given, which seem simply to have melted away in the general finances of the college, and that body had come practically to recognise only the fee-farm rent of £19 annually as the entire endowment of the hospital. Out of this sum, in 1894, £2 was paid to the "Presbyter of St Bartholomew's Hospital," who was not a presbyter at all, but an undergraduate performing the duties of a Bible clerk—not for the hospital but for the college. Ninepence a-week each was paid to four brethren, of whom one was in the workhouse, and the rest living miserably on charity in Oxford, twopence to each of them on St Thomas's Day, £2, 6s. 8d. to the same for fuel and "liveries" (5s. a-year each for these latter), and the remaining £6, 16s. 8d. was "taken to corporate revenues of the college." The buildings were let for agricultural purposes, and the proceeds also "taken to corporate revenues of the college." There have been worse cases of appropriation by fraudulent or ignorant trustees. But the fellows of Oriel are honourable and educated gentlemen. They had not intended to do wrong; they were uneasy at the condition of the foundation; they even professed to "ear-mark" their savings from the endowment, and though, when the

subject was raised by two energetic members of the city council—both university men—the statement of their case before the Charity Commissioners was a little involved, they consented to a compromise sufficiently honourable to all concerned. Oriel is to pay over £60 annually to certain trustees *besides the fee-farm rent which it had always acknowledged*. The Charity estates are now of course hopelessly merged in those of the College, but if the Commissioners' estimate of annual increment be correct, then Oriel stands indebted to this charity to the amount of six thousand pounds during the past century only, and certainly not less than ten thousand pounds in all. The chapel is to be restored by the munificence of a private member of the college. But the story of mixture and muddle remains. All the honourable intentions in the world will not go far to upset the force of Mr Rhodes's dictum.

The question was suggested above, How have the estates survived all this confused and tentative administration? It should be remembered that these corporate revenues are absolutely free from the occasional crushing charges which beset the possessions of the landed gentry: there are no jointures to be paid to widows; no marriage portions; no death-duties; no younger sons to be provided for and pensioned off. Loans have perforce to be provided for by sinking funds. And when to this is added that

in many cases vast portions of the revenue are what may be called automatic (Christ Church has £18,000 a-year in tithe, Magdalen, Oxford, £19,000 in house-rents, St John's, Oxford, £8000 in ground-rents), it will easily be understood that even the worst management could scarcely land these foundations in the hands of a receiver in bankruptcy—a fate which was certainly threatened in the case of one of the wealthiest colleges less than a score of years ago. Even to these advantages should be added the absolute prohibition of unwise speculation (*e.g.*, in house-building or the like) by the different official bodies who have from time to time had the power of authorising or refusing to sanction loans.

What is the remedy? A Commission to take over the revenues and administer the estates of incompetent bodies is the favourite remedy in this country. An experience of threescore years and ten has shown that such Commissions may be helpless in their turn in the hands of their legal advisers; that their bargains may be short-sighted, their methods extravagant, and their administrative expenditure immense. Bad as the state of things is when estates are managed by fellows of whom not one in ten knows by sight the lands from which his income is derived, the case is much worse when Commissioners whose horizon is limited by Gwydyr House and Whitehall Place are the ultimate arbiters. We have quoted heavy percentages for estates

management. Will some competent person ever write the history of the dealings with the goods intrusted to them of the "two Archbishops, thirty-one Bishops, five Cabinet Ministers, four Judges, three Deans, and twelve Eminent Laymen" who constitute the membership of a Commission which shall be nameless?

The true remedy would seem to be the appointment by Government in each college of a qualified official as receiver of external revenues. A step was made in this direction when the appointment of proper auditors from without was insisted on by the Commissioners in 1883. Such an official should have the appointment of bailiffs and the like, but these persons should have no control over any but the merest petty cash expenditure. The charges of estate agents when employed should be liable to taxation, and legal expenses also. In no case should a solicitor be employed by a college who acts for any other college: the interests of separate foundations must meet, and may collide. All internal management and finance might well be left to a fellow-bursar, whose duties in this respect need not occupy all his time, and whose salary would not be large. It is quite possible that at present there might be found existing fellows whose tried capabilities might justify their appointment as external treasurers of the kind indicated; but the supply of such fellows will manifestly tend to cease under the present régime, and the professional

bursar is already an element in practical politics. Lastly, in the case of colleges of small revenue, one such external treasurer could act for two foundations, — his salary, of course, being payable out of the revenues he collects,—while all internal arrangements would be strictly on the present lines. It may be remembered that the last Commission actually proposed the amalgamation of certain colleges—colleges alien to one another in character, in interests, and in local affinities. The proposal was very properly rejected; but the management for two colleges of estates of which their own fellows scarcely know the situation could hardly offend those sensitive corporate feelings which none would wish to irritate.

The remedy seems anomalous: so is the situation. We

have deliberately destroyed the college as it existed—a body of men capable of managing the family property on which they lived, able to devote their time to the purpose, and one in interest and in feeling; and we have required of their successors that they shall become students and teachers pure and simple—glorified headmasters, in short. Does any one ask a headmaster to calculate “fines” and let farms to the best advantage? No; surely no. Then in the name of all that is reasonable let us relieve these children in financial matters of a burden which they do not love, and see to it that a noble inheritance bequeathed to the nation by hundreds of benefactors of time past be not administered worse than the estate of the country landlord of to-day.

A. T. S. GOODRICK.

THE HOME OF THE GERMAN BAND.

As far as the writer's memory extends, the golden age of street music in the capital of Scotland covers the seventh and half of the eighth decade of last century. The piano-organ had not yet been invented to furnish employment for the needy Neapolitan, and din in our ears the fleeting frivolities of the London theatre and music-hall. The more classic barrel-organ might occasionally remind us to "paddle our own canoe"; but the burden of its song was "The Old Hundred," "Auld Robin Gray," and fine operatic melodies like that in Halévy's "La Juive," which has been so exquisitely arranged for the piano by Stephen Heller. The musical field was also occupied by German bands, good, bad, and indifferent. At that date five or six would be found in Edinburgh, and a corresponding number in all our large towns. It is with a German band of quite exceptional merit that I am about to deal in the following pages. This is the brass and reed band of the late Herr Michael Gilcher of Essweiler in Rhenish Bavaria, which played in the streets of Edinburgh from 1867 to 1872.

As a boy I used to follow these players for hours with melomaniac *acharnement*. On studying their movements, I observed that the bandsmen were as regular in their courses as the planets; and I

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got to know their pitches (as they are technically termed) so accurately, that I could track them out at any hour of the day. On Monday morning, emerging with burnished instruments from an obscure lodging, they began their weekly rounds in York Place; on Wednesday evening, after playing before a tobacconist's shop to a smoking parliament, they would serenade Robert Louis Stevenson; then they pitched their stands a little way off in front of the house of Mr (now Sir Alexander C.) Mackenzie; but before beginning their performance they considerably asked if they would not be interrupting him in his work. Late in the summer evenings the band was to be heard playing to large crowds either in Princes Street or in some street adjoining.

The programme which my friends performed at a particular stance commonly numbered three or four pieces—an overture, an operatic selection, a waltz, and a polka. Their *répertoire* was remarkable. The list of twenty overtures included not only easy compositions like the overtures to "Tancredi," "Norma," and "The Barber of Seville," but even Auber's "Masaniello" and Mozart's "La Clemenza di Tito," which are formidable enough to a professional orchestra. The operatic selections were drawn from the

whole range of Italian and the most popular French and German operas. For nothing or a copper one could enjoy the finest arias from "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," "Lucrezia Borgia," "Faust," "Le Prophète," "Der Freischütz," and "Zauberflöte"; but Herr Gilcher went farther afield and regaled his patrons with melodies from "Attila," "Belisario," and "Anna Bolena." Though the thin orchestration, incoherence, and lack of artistic unity which mar the earlier Italian operas have justly driven them from the stage, it is indeed to be regretted that the beautiful melodies which they contain—so well adapted as they are to the sustained notes of the clarinet, the cornet, and the trombone—have given place in the programmes of our military bands to selections from the comic operas of the hour. As an adjunct to a witty libretto, and set off by pretty faces, costumes, and scenery, this light class of music may perhaps be endured in a theatre, but it really seems a dissipation of energy for thirty grown men to spend their breath in producing sound which yields so little sense.

In the region of dance music Herr Gilcher was no less fastidious. Far from pandering to the vulgar taste, he sought, like Mr Lowe, to educate his masters. Scorning the platitudes and banalities of the English and the French school, he confined himself mainly to the classical waltzes of Lanner, Labitzky, the Strausses, and Gungl,—compositions to which

our mothers and grandmothers danced as girls, but which, now neglected on account of their difficulty, are only to be heard in Austria, their original home. The good old waltz is more than an engine to make you dance: having come from the heart, it goes to the heart; and to it may well be applied the saying of Hans Andersen, "Where words fail, music speaks." I shall never forget the storm of enthusiasm that burst forth at the last concert which Johann Strauss conducted in Leipzig. As he was laying down his baton, thousands of voices exclaimed, "Donau," "Donau" ("The Blue Danube"), and the *Kapellmeister* was not allowed to quit the platform before he had performed his masterpiece. Another waltz, "The Schönbrunner" of Lanner, has become as dear to the Viennese as "Auld Lang Syne" to the Scotch; and one may often hear an entire beer-garden join in the swing of the second movement. Lanner was represented by "Die Kosenden," Labitzky by "The Bedford" and "The Essex," and Johann Strauss by many of his recent waltzes, and by those exquisite waltzes of an earlier period, "The Lockvögel" and "The Volksänger," the latter written in the Ländler style. In Gungl's compositions Herr Gilcher was a specialist. As a matter of course he played many familiar waltzes, like "Soldatenlieder," "Hydropatienten," and the "Amoretten-tänze," which experts consider the best instrumented of Gungl's works; but his musical

library included not a few earlier waltzes of singular beauty and pathos which, unfortunately, are now almost forgotten. Of these it will suffice to mention "Terpsichores Schwingen," "Fleurs de Fantaisie," "Immortellen," composed in memory of Strauss the elder, and "Wanderlieder," which is compact with melody from beginning to end.

The little band was eight strong. The instruments comprised two clarionets, a flute, a cornet, a Belgian trombone, two French horns, and a bass. One or two of the players were weak, but the sweet and mellow tones of the B-flat clarionet and of the trombone were the envy of many a good player; and the boy who played the flute rose to be flautist in the Boston Orchestra, at one time conducted by George Henschel. Herr Rumpf performed on the clarionet with much expression "Roberto, oh! tu che adoro," by Meyerbeer, and "Ernani, Ernani, Involami," by Verdi, and with the E-flat clarionet-player the famous "Mira, O Norma." Two favourite pieces of the trombone-player were a cavatina by Gagliardi and "Tutto è sciolto" from "La Sonnambula." The short duet between the clarionet and the trombone in the introduction to Marriot's "Zora Waltz" could hardly have been surpassed by professional musicians. The *ensemble*, too, was excellent. With such skill were the pieces reduced from the score for military bands or adapted from the piano edition, that much of the full effect was preserved.

In 1872 the band suddenly migrated to America, and I was disconsolate. So zealous a votary had I been of my eight Muses, that already I knew by heart their entire *répertoire*; and many a street and many a lamp had for me its musical history. Like a true enthusiast I could not rest content till I discovered the titles of the pieces they had played, so as to procure piano arrangements as a permanent memorial of the performances of the band. Some of these titles I learned from the men themselves; some I have never found; others I have unearthed with difficulty. Of the trouble I had in the process I shall give one or two illustrations. Many years later, while comparing notes with a musical friend, I was surprised to find that the first movement of one of my store of waltzes was identical with the Danish Volkslied, "Necken." I failed to procure from Copenhagen a waltz based on that theme. Several attempts I made at home were equally unsuccessful. At last a music-seller recognised my tune as an English waltz published thirty years before, and by sending to London the first few bars discovered the object of my quest in "The Watersprite Waltz," for which Coote had sought and found inspiration in the song of the Sea-god. Another unknown waltz I heard in a theatre, and promptly asking the title from one of the orchestra, received for answer, "The Pet-vot Waltz." With this unpromising title I vainly tried to procure a copy. On hearing

the waltz again I asked my informant to write the name down. It proved to be "The Bedford Waltz," which his foreign tongue had transformed into Petvot. It was not until 1895 that I chanced upon the title of a striking march which I have heard from no other band than that of Herr Gilcher. Brahms' Dances and Liszt's Rhapsodies had developed in me a love for Hungarian music, and love grew to passion when I heard the marvellous fire and rhythm of the band with which Herr Barcza has so often visited this country. In order to explore Hungarian music I went to Buda Pesth, where, among many Magyar treasures, I bought by chance a collection of five revolutionary marches of the time of Kossuth. In this little book I found, after twenty-three years, my favourite march, the defiant "Jász Kun," from the province of Cumania in Hungary. It is called in German "Die Sensenmänner," or "The Seythemen," from the improvised weapons with which the peasants fought in the Revolution of 1848.

Having learned in the summer of 1895 from some Edinburgh *Musikanten* or street musicians that my old bandmaster and Herr Jacob Gilcher, his brother-in-law, had returned from America and settled in their old home, I resolved to make a pilgrimage to the remnant of the band which had first inspired me with a love of music. From Kaiserslautern in the Palatinate, fifty miles as the crow flies south-west of

Mainz, I travelled on a fine September morning to Wolfstein, in the beautiful valley of the Lauter. The Lauter flows through pleasant meadow-land flanked by basaltic or by sandstone mountains, covered to the summit with forests of pine. Wine is extensively grown on the lower slopes, and a tolerable brand takes its name from the *Musikanten*-metropolis, Wolfstein, which nestles picturesquely at the base of the Königsberg, 1700 feet in height. The Roman road to Moguntiacum (Mainz) crosses the shoulder of the Königsberg, and the whole neighbourhood is rich in antiquities, many of which have been removed to the provincial museum at Speyer. Herr Gilcher, then burgomaster of the village of Essweiler, was by arrangement waiting for me at Wolfstein station, and by his expectant look I recognised my friend in a hale old man of over seventy, with snow-white hair, moustache, and Napoleon beard, as erect and imposing as a general. After shaking hands with me, he said, "I scarcely understand whom I have the honour to entertain as my guest." I replied, "I am the boy who, twenty-five years ago, followed your band in the streets of Edinburgh. 'Alles was sonnig und wonnig war in meiner Jugend hängt mit der Kapelle Gilcher zusammen.'" (All that was sunny and happy in my youth is bound up with Gilcher's band.)

We crossed the rails to Schneider's Inn, and over a glass of Wolfsteiner talked of days gone by; and when I

sang or whistled the old tunes, Herr Gilcher was proud to see that he had not been forgotten in Edinburgh. A weather-beaten countryman in the room, with shaggy black beard and wideawake hat, and all the air of a colonial, addressing me in good English, expressed his surprise at my musical memory. I told him that, though I was no musician, I was at least fond of music.

"Where did you learn your English?" I asked.

"In Liverpool, sir."

"What were you doing there?"

Looking towards the burgomaster, he replied, "I was fourteen years in Liverpool in the same business as Mr Mayor, sir." At eleven o'clock, a late hour for dinner in a district where the peasants, to avoid the noonday heat, are at work in summer by four in the morning, we had a simple but excellent *table d'hôte* of five courses with wine, for which my host paid 1s. 2d. a-head. There are no cabs in Wolfstein, but with the help of a chair we mounted into a ladder-cart which the burgomaster had thoughtfully provided, took our seats on a plank covered with a railway rug, and moved off in state for Essweiler, my Liverpool friend acting as driver. As we wound up the hillside under the fruit-trees which line the road, my friends pointed now to a croft, now to a shop or inn, in which was invested the little fortune that some *Musikant* or strolling musician had made in the streets of London, Chicago, or

Melbourne. At the outskirts of Essweiler we saluted an Edinburgh *Musikant* home on a holiday, who was just then in his shirt-sleeves, lopping the branches of a tree. It now began to dawn on me that I had reached "the back o' beyond," the veritable nursery and home of the German band. To get to the burgomaster's house at the farther end of this village of crofters, we had to thread our way with caution through cattle and sheep, cocks and hens, and all the impediments of a farmyard. The burgomaster took me to his office and showed me the archives of Essweiler; we then passed into the "best room," where I was introduced to his wife and daughters, simple but kind country-people.

Over our afternoon coffee Herr Gilcher told me something of his history. After playing one season at Geneva in 1855, he was for several years member of a band in the south of France. He there worked hard at his own instrument, the clarinet, learned to play all the brass instruments, and studied the theory of music to so good purpose that he wrote an opera entitled "*Telemachus*." He had travelled a short time with the band in the north of Spain, and added a little Spanish to his knowledge of French. Southampton was the first English town in which he woke the echoes; and from there he went again and again with a band of his own in the steamers which plied to the West Indies. A free passage to Australia was offered to

him, with the option of returning at once or of permanently settling in the colony. He and his men pitched their camp in Melbourne, where they shared the honours with the English military bands, occasionally making a round of the squatters, who entertained them hospitably, and did not send them away empty-handed.

Herr Gilcher came to Edinburgh in 1867 with fifteen men, whom he divided into two bands of eight and seven. At first he appeared as an Apollo Musagetes in the larger band, but subsequently remained behind the scenes, training his men and arranging and harmonising fresh music. The work of adapting a single piece would often occupy him the best part of a day. The bandsmen liked Edinburgh and its people, and especially enjoyed the summer evenings, when they played to appreciative and liberal crowds in or near Princes Street. During the holiday season they were to be found on board the Crinan and Oban steamer, and gave concerts in the evening at Oban in the garden of the Great Western Hotel. They suffered much during the severe winter of the siege of Paris; and sometimes their instruments froze like the driver's horn in Baron Münchhausen.

In 1872 Herr Gilcher removed to Boston, where he had as many as thirty men under his command. It was only for a short time that he played in the streets. Before long he had established his position as a musical *entre-*

preneur, supplying bands for balls, garden-parties, excursions, and processions. On the 4th of July he used to appear with his entire force in uniform, and by the novel effects he introduced in his marches he quite vanquished his American rivals. "By God!" said he, "we killed them all." Two of his pupils rose from *Musikanten* to be *Musiker* or artists—his son, the flute-player, now dead, and another who has played in the orchestra of the Wagner Opera House at Bayreuth. In 1888 he left four of his sons in good positions in Boston, and returned with a competency to Essweiler, accompanied by the trombone-player, his brother-in-law, Jacob Gilcher, with whom he had travelled for forty years. He bought a house and a small farm, on which he grew his own wine, was made burgomaster of the village, and stood high among the people of the district. Now that he had retired, he felt the *ennui* of leisure, and regretted the days of his activity when he was always rising higher. I reminded him that in his busy life he had accomplished much, and was still doing important work in his office of burgomaster.

We paid a visit to Herr Kilian, the proprietor of a small inn, who was said to be the farthest-travelled *Musikant* in the valley. Unfortunately he had broken his arm, and I could not "interview" him. He was a wonderful performer on the trombone, and most enterprising and successful as a bandmaster. In 1868 Herr

Kilian started with his men from Barcelona for Madrid, but was compelled to beat a retreat and withdraw from Spain, in consequence of the political troubles which resulted in the expulsion of Queen Isabella. The following year, at the suggestion of some Essweiler emigrants, he went to America to try his fortune. His band was one of the first to cross the Atlantic. One of their early experiences was to accompany a circus during a whole summer on a tour through the States. He was subsequently in Australia, and from there, I was told, he had visited the Chinese ports; and during an outbreak of cholera he and his men had buried a German doctor, a native of Wolfstein. In the service of an American showman he had seen much of India, and his travels had extended to near the Afghan frontier. Although I did not see Herr Kilian, I had the good fortune to meet his brother—a man of eighty, with a clear eye and a severe and resolute expression. When the old man heard me speak of Edinburgh with the burgo-master, he said, "I've been in Scotland too."

"When were you there?"

"I think I was there before you, sir."

"When was that?"

"The first time was in 1842."

"Then I confess you have the advantage of me. I was not in Scotland in the year 1842. What were you doing in Scotland?"

"Year after year I went

there with a band of seven men, and I have travelled on foot as far north as Thurso." He then named to me accurately the coast towns north of Inverness. He remembered Edinburgh distinctly — the Castle, the Calton Hill, and, strange to say, the place of execution. Here the burgo-master interposed, "In those days I daresay you sometimes knew what is meant by *Maul-und-Klauenseuche* (foot-and-mouth disease)?"

"That we did, but we managed to struggle through."

"Did you make much in Scotland?" I asked.

"Enough for our wants and something for old age."

"What did you think of the Scotch?"

"Good, pious, upright people."

"Well, if you have so high an opinion of Scotland, will you drink a glass with me?"

"With pleasure."

"What are you drinking?"

"*Kümmel*, sir."

In my mind *Kümmel* was associated with a dear dinner, a small glass, and a big price; and when the hostess demanded for our two glasses the modest sum of 1d., I was disappointed to find that I had paid so cheap a compliment to this interesting musical veteran, so sincere an admirer of my country.

During this conversation Jacob Gilcher passed the window of Kilian's inn on his way home from his work in the fields, and I recognised him at once by his swinging walk. When we went to see him he

was chopping wood in a shed. Looking hard at him, I asked, "Do you know me?"

"No."

"Well, it is no wonder, when you have not seen me for twenty-three years. Were you ever in Edinburgh?"

"Yes."

"Can you recall the house of the Austrian consul?"

"Yes."

He then remembered distinctly how he had once gone into a house a few doors off, trombone in hand, and talked German with the people. Pointing to his house and stable, "Do you see that?" he said; "that's what I've bought with the money I made abroad."

After an early supper the burgomaster, lamp in hand, conducted me to my quarters for the night. "I am sorry," he said, "I have not a spare room for you, but," he added in his charmingly archaic dialect, "you are to stay in the inn kept by my brother-in-law, his daughter, her husband." Here, I thought, was a puzzle which only some old lady profound in genealogy could solve, but I did at last succeed in grasping the relationship so circuitously described. A large company was gathered to meet me round the plain deal table of the simple inn,—the Gilchers, two *Musikanten* from Edinburgh, the schoolmaster and his two sons, and a young sculptor who had come home for a holiday. Three bottles of *Landwein*, ordered for the good of the house and the benefit of the company, cost the amazingly small sum of 2s. 6d.

From the young men I gathered much curious information which will presently be recorded. For the moment I was more intent on my musical investigations, so I turned to my neighbour, the trombone-player, and besieged him with a potpourri of tunes, including some of his operatic solos. The rest of the company, more interested in the price of potatoes, plums, and wine, were dumfounded at the sight of the foreigner whistling and singing as if he were mad. But the bandmaster was more than gratified with the enthusiasm of his devotee, and when I said, "Don't you see the cursed Englishman knows the old pieces better than the bandmaster himself?" the good man shook his great sides with laughter.

A refreshing sleep in a bed as spotlessly clean as the cleanest in Holland prepared me for my early coffee. When I asked the hostess if she knew English, she answered me in the purest Yankee acquired in Boston, where she had been brought up. Then her father Jacob appeared and took me to his house to discover for me the names of the pieces which I wanted. From below the bed in the "best room" he dragged a clothes-basket containing the music-books of the old band, and laid them out on the table. There again were the weather-beaten pages which I had last seen in 1872, blistered by the glaring heat of Melbourne, and bespattered by the rains of Edinburgh and the snows of America. The edges of one of the books were burned: when

I asked the cause, "Oh," said Jacob, "that happened in a railway accident in America when the train went on fire. We saved our books with difficulty." Despite his forty years' travels and exposure in every clime, he was never ill a day; and he was as lithe, active, and happy at fifty-four as he was in his twenties. While we went on page by page, he hopped about from one book to another, according as the melody was allotted now to this and now to that instrument, until I had identified my tune and jotted down its name. I was surprised to see how rare some of the music was. It would be hard to say how these roving musicians came by their selections from "*Gemma di Vergy*" and Mercadante's "*Erode*," the cavatina by Gagliardi, or rarities like the Cumanian March and Lanner's waltz "*Die Kosenden*." A band from this quarter actually plays a selection from "*Demophon*," the first opera published by Cherubini in Paris, a work which has appeared in the Peters' edition, but is now never performed either in whole or in part. Possibly such choice pieces were first copied from the music-books of military bands by *Musikanten* serving in the army, and then transmitted from band to band. I was disappointed to find that Jacob had sold his trombone, and that I was not to have the pleasure of hearing a solo. He was now too busy to think of music.

"Have you never a desire to play?"

"Yes; sometimes the old feeling will rise up again when I am working in the fields, but I must just repress it."

"Well, I can never forgive you for selling your instrument: if it was a gain to you, it was a loss to every one else."

A ten o'clock lunch, consisting of the Bauer's staple dish, an ocean of ham and eggs with appurtenances, did not whet my appetite for the "hangman's" meal which awaited me at the burgomaster's an hour later. Here with Homeric hospitality was put before me a repast of five prodigious courses, of which the fourth, the traditional *Zwetschenkuchen*, was of truly titanic dimensions. The whole was washed down with generous draughts of wine of my host's own growing. I survived this dietetic adventure, and after dinner examined photographs of Herr Gilcher in his prime at the head of the band which he took to America, and of the band of a circus with which Jacob had travelled as far as Mexico.

After completing my musical inquiries, and taking leave of the family, in the company of the burgomaster I visited the well-appointed village school, and we then went on to my little inn to rejoin Jacob, who had been copying for me the *Kapellmeister's* lovely *Gemüths-Polka*. A distiller's traveller arrived on the scene, and a lively debate ensued between him and Jacob whether he should pay 1 mark 80 or 1 mark 90 for 50 kilos of plums. At last I had to tear myself away from the old man with

the promise that I would be sure to come and see him when I returned to Germany. He assured me of a welcome, adding pathetically, "If I live." I was accompanied to the station by Jacob, Herr Matthias, an Edinburgh *Musikant*, and the sculptor. Before quitting the village Herr Matthias took me into his house, a model of cleanliness, and there was a picture of industry—three or four young women busy with their fingers or the sewing-machine. They seemed too shy to speak to a foreigner, so I broke the silence. "You country-people," I said, "are always industrious: indoors you make clothes, and in your fields you provide us townspeople with meat, corn, vegetables, fruit, wine; without you we couldn't live." On our way we met a crowd of people following a cart.

"Is that a picnic party?" I asked.

"No, sir; that's one of our bands returning home. One arrived yesterday from America, and probably this one has come by the same steamer."

The inhabitants of the north-west Palatinate generally are of a roving disposition. The shoe-hawkers of Pirmasens, the brush-dealers of Romberg, and the showmen and pedlars of Karlsberg, are to be met with all over the valley of the Rhine. But these must yield the palm in numbers and enterprise to the *Musikanten* of the Hardt Mountains, who have made the whole world their own. They are not so often seen on the Continent as they formerly

were, but they go to England, the Cape, Australia, the States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, and one band has ventured as far as Chili. If any one ever reaches the North Pole and finds the inevitable Scotchman smoking his pipe on the top, he is sure to be tossing coppers to a German band from the Pfalz. In my experience (and I speak with the authority of a specialist) I have known of only two bands that did not come from this district: the one was from Nassau, the other from Pforzheim in Baden. It is computed that there were at one time over 6000 *Musikanten* in the valleys of the Lauter and the Oden, and in the valley of the Glan, which receives the waters of these streams and discharges them above Kreuznach into the Nahe, a tributary of the Rhine. In these three valleys a pedestrian might safely ask his way in English; and in winter, when many of the *Musikanten* are at home, if you meet a promiscuous company of ten in an inn, seven or eight are sure to know at least one foreign language. There are single villages which could muster as many as two hundred players. But even without making a voyage of discovery and establishing the habitat of the *Musikanten* by scientific methods, it would surely not have required extraordinary detective powers to infer their common origin from the identity of much of the music that the bands play. Any one who has kept himself abreast of the street music of this generation, must have in the

musical chambers of his memory many simple dance tunes peculiar to German bands and common to them all. These are unpublished compositions by the local bandmasters, or *Meister* as they are called, and they are passed on from one band to the other. One *Meister* of my acquaintance has already reached opus 300. Apart from these *anecdota*, which cannot be cited here, a piece which was invariably included in the *répertoire* of the smaller bands was Gungl's "Kriegers Marsch"; two other pieces commonly played were an "Abschieds-Polonaise" by Flotow and the familiar "Morgenstern" Waltz of the elder Labitzky, which is now a schoolroom classic.

The patient reader will naturally inquire how old this musical industry is, and what led the crofters of the Hardt in particular to pursue it. Though it is not recorded in the 'Germania' of Tacitus among the ancient institutions of the Fatherland, its origin goes back at least beyond the memory of living men, perhaps to the beginning of last century. The veteran Kilian, born not later than 1815, assured me that peripatetic bands existed long before his day. More than a hundred years ago the Prince of Leiningen, who was the first husband of the mother of Queen Victoria, cleared a forest on his domain, and planting there a community of gipsies, beggars, and vagrants, named their village after himself, Karlsberg. The *Matzenberger*, as they are locally

called, are known far and wide as pedlars and wandering musicians, and formerly bore a questionable reputation. But larger political and economic causes must have been at work to convert a whole region of crofters into a conservatorium of street music. Rhenish Bavaria, ceded by the treaty of Lunéville in 1802, was held by France till 1815. Neglected then by her step-mother, though subsequently reunited to Bavaria, she was so isolated from the rest of the country that she always lagged behind in trade and commerce. Mushroom Ludwigshafen and prosperous Neustadt and Kaiserslautern attest the rapidity with which the rest of the Palatinate has advanced since 1870; but the uplands of the Hardt, to which the railway penetrated only eighteen years ago, lay too far apart to participate in the general industrial progress. Still the mountainous home of the tuneful crofters was not so barren as to compel them to seek their bread abroad, for it yielded corn, fruit, wine, and all kinds of farm produce. Perhaps it was the poor field-labourers, dissatisfied with the wage of 10s. they received for a week's hard work (or *Schaffen*, "creation," in their own beautiful language), that made the first musical wanderings; and as these proved not only lucrative but interesting and romantic, the sons of even well-to-do farmers devoted themselves to this curious vocation—surely a more reasonable solution of the land question than shooting people from behind a hedge.

The *Musikanten* would confine their earliest peregrinations to the neighbouring towns, but in course of time they doubtless extended the sweep of their orbit over Germany, France, Holland, and Belgium, till they reached the ports on the North Sea: thence they would be tempted by the fabled wealth of England to cross to our El Dorado, and once there, they were on the highway to the rest of the world.

During the absence of the bandsman his thrifty wife looks after the croft, and her no less thrifty husband regularly sends remittances to eke out her scanty earnings. The event of the day is the arrival of the postman, and the women gather in the street anxiously to await his approach.

"Good news from your man?" asks one.

"Yes; he's playing in a beer-garden at Helsingfors in Finland, and sends me £2 a-month. He's coming back in the autumn."

"And where is your Heinrich?"

"He's in Johannesburg, and is getting on well; for though living is dear there, the people are so free with their money that he hopes to bring with him a little fortune when he comes back next year."

"I wish my man were as near home," says another. "In his letter he tells me he has reached Sydney in safety, but the long voyage from San Francisco has eaten up his savings, and he'll have to stay for a year in Australia to make enough to pay his way home

and bring something for me. When he was in America he never sent me less than a pound a-week." At times the intelligence is tragic, and on the pastor of the village falls the mournful duty of breaking to a family the news of the death of some bandsman in foreign parts. Three members of a band in Rio Janeiro were once cut off with yellow fever, and the remnant were reduced to such straits that they were compelled to apply to the German consul for assistance to take them home. To provide against sickness and death, friendly societies have been formed in many villages, numbering sometimes more than a hundred members.

As the autumn draws on the *Musikanten* are seized with home-woe—"Hoamweh" (*Heimweh*) they call it. About the time of the vintage they return from all the points of the compass to spend the winter in their native valleys; and many a scene of joy or sorrow is enacted on their arrival. In the home-coming of the *Musikant* there is a good deal that recalls the life of the sailors in our small seaports a generation ago. A little boy lays his first earnings in his mother's lap; a youth has saved enough to wed his "bride" and found a crofter's home; a father receives from his wife's arms a new-comer to the world whom he greets for the first time; a son finds his home desolate, for his aged father and mother have died while he was far away. Like seamen, too, the bandsmen bring home trophies

to adorn their walls—pictures of the cities where they have played, pieces of coral, humming birds with their nests, or strange plants and animals. For the first few weeks they help to complete the harvest, lay in fuel, and make other preparations for the winter; and in the long dark nights they crowd the inns, and over a *Schoppen* or a *Seidel* exchange their curious experiences *aus aller Herren Ländern*. One bandsman extols the beauties of Stockholm, where he has been playing all the summer at the *Strömparterrn*. An *Essweiler Meister* tells how every year he goes by Lübeck to Riga and “concertises” in Russia. He buys for the season a pair of horses and a covered waggon, in which he houses his band—herein reviving the practice of the ancient Scythian inhabitants of the country whom the Greeks described as *ἡμαξόβιοι* or waggon-dwellers. Or some one may relate the misadventure of a band which landed at Havana and was forbidden to play in the streets: their money was soon exhausted, and it was only the generosity of the German residents that enabled them to cross to Key West and thence to New Orleans.

With the advent of spring the musical valleys are all astir, and the *Meister* set to work to organise and train their forces for the summer campaign. Age, death, military service, incompetence, or other causes, create vacancies in the bands which have to be supplied: if the necessary instrument is not to be had in one village,

it must be sought for in the next; and if a qualified player is not forthcoming at all, the *Meister* must content himself with some beginner, fresh from the village school, who may at least suggest the part required. The boys there learn their instruments as the bandsmen do in our country towns: if there is no one to help them in their own home, they get instruction from some musical neighbour. They must also acquire a few words of English, such as, “Please to help the band,” “Thank you, sir”; for out of policy the small boys with instruments as big as themselves are sent to collect the money. Once engaged by a *Meister*, they enjoy the advantage of regular instruction; and if possessed of any talent at all, they are assured of permanent employment, with board, lodging, expenses, and a wage rising from 5s. to 18s. a-week. It is in this way that the better bands are composed which are to be met with in our large cities and in health-resorts like Southport, where one may hear an excellent band of eighteen men from the Hardt under the command of Herr Mersy. His brother from Aschbach, for the last thirty years *Meister* in Edinburgh, at one time employed twenty-four men; and Herr Schneider, who from his wealth is styled the king of the *Musikanten*, and lives in regal splendour at Rossbach, had never less than thirty to forty men in his three bands in London. When the individual players have been tested and the bands duly constituted,

ensemble practice begins, and the performances are subjected to the keen but friendly comments of the critics of the neighbourhood. In their *répertoires* the *Meister* cunningly include pieces specially suited for the countries in which they are to travel. If bound for Russia, they prepare the National Hymn, and such melodies as "Die Nachtigall," "Der Rothe Sarafan," and "Schöne Minka"; for Sweden they practise, besides the *polksor*, perhaps "Krystallen den fina," "Wermlands Visa," or "Mandom mod och morska män"; and they think Scotland and England would not be satisfied without Scottish airs and selections from Sullivan's comic operas.

By March or April all is ready, the ladder-cart is loaded with luggage and instruments, and the bandsmen make their way on foot to the nearest station accompanied by a crowd of kinsfolk, who speed them on their journey with many a blessing and many a cheer. Sometimes a band will take the steamer down the Rhine and defray expenses by entertaining the passengers to the "Lorelei," the "Rheinlied," and other appropriate songs; but the common practice is to travel by train to some seaport. At the time of the annual exodus as many as a hundred *Musikanten* will assemble in one day at Rotterdam ready to invade our coasts. In former times the journey to Holland or Belgium was often made on foot. When Herr Mersy first came to England in 1856, he

walked all the way from Aschbach to Ostend, a distance of wellnigh three hundred miles. Nowadays this apostolic method of travelling is confined to the smaller and inferior bands, of which I have now something to say.

When all the better players have been enlisted by the *Meister* for the larger bands which systematically exploit our cities or obtain engagements at health-resorts, the residuum crystallises into smaller companies, which are managed on the joint-stock principle, and move about from place to place. Sometimes the wives and sisters of the bandsmen are called in to fill up the ranks; and one has heard such odd-looking bands sing and play the German folk-songs in a manner countrified perhaps, still not unpleasing. But the playing of these novices is commonly execrable. Their life, however, is humanly, if not musically, interesting. Though they may earn a little money, they endure much abuse and hardship in the process. The better *Musikanten* have always a home; they are well housed, well fed, and well paid. But the strollers earn less money, live in the common lodging-house, and get their meals at irregular times. A conversation I once had with the clarionet-player in an exceptionally cacophonous band may throw some light on their mode of life. Prefacing my questions with a conciliatory sixpence, I asked—

"How long have you been in Edinburgh?"

"Two months."

"Where were you in summer?"

"We went as far north as Invergordon."

"Did you go by train?"

"No, we can't afford that; we walked all the way."

"How do you know the roads, and the best places to visit?"

"We've been many times in Scotland, and are quite at home here."

"But how did you manage the first time?"

"My father, who was for many years in Glasgow, and used to play with his band on the Oban steamer, knows Scotland well and all the places worth going to, and he gave me full instructions before we left home."

"What if you went off the road in the Highlands, and wandered among the moors where there is nobody to play to?"

"Oh, we carry a map, and we always get directions from the people we lodge with before starting in the morning." Here the bandsman, taking out his map, showed me the route he had followed.

"But how do you find lodgings?"

"We know enough English to ask; and if there's no lodging-house in the town, we sleep outside."

"How much do you pay for a night's lodging?"

"Fourpence or sixpence a-head."

"Where do you come from?"

"Our home is near Wolfstein in the Rheinpfalz."

"By which route did you come to England?"

"We travelled by train to Rotterdam, and crossed to Harwich."

"How long did it take you to reach Edinburgh?"

"Three months: we zig-zagged through England, playing all the way."

"How do you get your food when you move about so much?"

"We take a good breakfast in our lodging before starting; at midday we buy some bread and cheese; and we cook some meat in the evening so as to have at least one solid meal a-day."

"Are you not afraid of being cheated by the men who collect the money?"

"No: we are neighbours at home, and can trust each other; our people are seldom dishonest; but I have heard of bands in which the men suspected each other, and took day about in collecting the money."

Such is the life of the German bandsmen,—a curious life, but perchance as happy as yours or mine. Think kindly of them when you pass them, and don't grudge a copper for the "gudewife" at home; and if you should ever be in the Pfalz, don't fail to visit the oldest-fashioned place and the simplest and kindest people on earth. *Es leben die Musikanten. "Fröhlich Pfalz, Gott erhalt's."*

GEORGE B. GARDINER.

EPISODES IN THE ADVENTURES OF M. D'HARICOT.

(Translated from the original French by J. STORER CLOUSTON.)

THE MONSIEUR EX MACHINÂ.

I.

"To the foolish give counsel from the head; to the wise from the heart."—CERVANTO Y'ALVEZ.

"It is evident *you* don't know what falling in love means," said Dick.

I looked at him hard.

"Do you?" I asked.

Dick actually blushed.

"Well," he replied with a smile that had a little tenderness as well as humour, "since you are a man of feeling, monsieur, and by way of being—don't you know?—yourself, I might as well tell you. I've rather played the fool, I expect."

He said this with an air of sincerity, but it was clear he did not think himself so very stupid in the matter.

"My dear friend!" I cried, "I am all ears and sympathy,—also intelligent advice."

And then the story came out. I shall not give it in Dick's words, for these were not selected with a view to romantic effect; and the story deserves better treatment.

It appeared that some twenty years before, a cousin of Lady Shafthead's had taken a step which for ever disgraced her in the eyes of her impecunious but ancient family. She had in fact married the local attorney, a vulgar but insinuating person with a doubtful reputation for honesty and in-

dustry. The consequences bore out the warnings of her family. He went from bad to worse, and she from discomfort to misery, until at last they both died, leaving not a single penny in the world, but instead a little orphan daughter. Of all the scandalised relations, Lady Shafthead had alone come to the rescue. She had the girl educated in a respectable school, and now when she was nineteen years of age, gave her a home until she could find a profession for herself.

This latter step did not meet with Sir Philip's approval. He had lent the father money, and in return had his name forged for a considerable amount: besides, he did not approve of bourgeois relations. However, he had reluctantly enough consented to let Miss Agnes Grey spend a few months at his house, on the understanding that as soon as an occupation was found, that was to be the last of the unworthy connection.

At this stage in the story—about a fortnight ago—fate and a short-sighted guest put a charge of shot into the baronet's left shoulder. At first it was feared the accident might be dangerous.

Dick was hurriedly summoned home, and there he found Miss Agnes Grey grown (so he assured me) into one of the most charming girls imaginable. He had known her and been fond of her in a patronising way for some years. Now he saw her with tears in her voice, anxious about his father, devoted to his mother, and all the time feeling herself a forlorn and superfluous dependent. What would any chivalrous young man with an unattached heart have done under these circumstances? What would I have done myself? Fallen in love, of course, or something like it.

Well, Dick did not do things by halves. He fell completely in love; circumstances hurried matters to an issue; and he discovered himself beloved in turn. Little was said and little was done, but quite enough to enable a discerning eye to see at the first glance that something had happened to Dick.

And here he sat with his blue eyes looking far through the walls of my room, and his mouth compressed, giving his confidence not to one of his oldest and most discreet friends, but to one who could share a sentiment. A strange state of things for Dick Shaft-head!

"It is an honourable passion?" I asked.

"What the devil!—" began Dick.

"Pardon," I interposed. "I believe you. But the world is complex and I merely asked. You are then engaged?"

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Dick frowned. "We haven't used that word," he replied.

"But you intend to be?"

He was silent for a little, and then with some bitterness said, "My earnings for the last three years average £37, 11s. 4d. I have had two briefs precisely this term, and I am thirty years old. It would be an excellent thing to get engaged."

"But your father—he will surely help you?"

"He will see me damned first."

"Then he will not approve of Miss Grey?"

"He will not."

"Have you asked him?"

"No."

Again Dick was silent for a minute, and then he went on, "Look here, D'Haricot, old man, this is how it is. I know my father; he's one of the best, but if I've got any prejudices I inherit them honestly. What he likes he likes; and what he doesn't like he doesn't like. He doesn't like Agnes, he doesn't like her family,—or didn't like 'em,—he doesn't like younger sons marrying poor girls. On the other hand, he does like the 'right kind of people,' as he calls 'em, and the right sort of marriage, and he does like me too well, I think, to see me doing what he doesn't like. I have only a hundred a year of my own and expectations from an aunt of fifty-two who has never had a day's illness in her life. You see?"

"What will you do?" I asked.

"What can I do?" he replied, and added, "It is pleasant folly."

His brows were knitted, his mouth shut tight, his eyes hard. He had come down to stern realities, and the mood of tenderness had passed.

"But you really love her?" I said.

His face lit up for a moment. "I do," he answered, and then quickly the face clouded again.

"My friend," I said, "I share your sentiments, and I judge your case for you. What is life without woman, without love? Would you place your income, your prospects, the sordid aspects of your life, even the displeasure of relations, before the most sacred passion of your heart? Dick, if you do not say to this dear girl, 'I love you; let the devil himself try to part us!' I shall not think of you as the same friend."

He gave a quick glance, and in his eye I saw that my audience was with me in spirit.

"And my father? Tell him that too?" he said, drily in tone, but not unmoved I was sure.

"Tell him that your veneration, your homage, belongs to him, but that your soul is your own! Tell him that you are

not afraid to take some risk for one you love! Are you afraid, Dick?"

He gave a short laugh.

"I'd risk something," he replied.

"Only something? And for Agnes Grey, Dick? Think of the future without her, the life you have been leading repeated from day to day, now that you have known her. Is that pleasant? Is she not worth some risk—a good deal of risk?"

He rose and then he smiled; and he had a very pleasant smile.

"Thanks," he said; "you're a good chap, monsieur. I wish you had to tackle the governor, though."

"Let me!" I exclaimed.

"Well," he said, "if I want an eloquent counsel, I know where to look for one. Good-night."

"You will dare it?" I asked as he went towards the door.

"Shouldn't be surprised," he answered, and with a friendly nod was gone.

I thought that I had done a splendid afternoon's work. "And now for a 'burst'!" I said to myself.

II.

"We won't go home till morning."—*English Song.*

I dressed for the evening; I filled my purse; and I sought out Teddy Lumme. We met

for the first time since I left Seneschal Court, but at the first greeting it was evident that all resentment had passed from his mind as completely as it had from mine.

"Where the Deuce have you been hiding?" he asked me with his old geniality. "We wanted you the other night. Great evening we had; Archie

and me and Bobby and Tyler; box at the Empire; supper at the European; danced till six in the morning at Covent Garden; breakfast at Muggins'; and the devil of a day after that. I'd have sent you a wire, but I thought you'd left town. No one has seen you. Been getting up another conspiracy, what? Chap at the French Embassy told me the other day their Government expected your people to have a kick-up soon. By Jove, though, he told me not to tell any one! But you won't say anything about it, I daresay."

"I can assure you it is news to me," I replied; "but in any case I certainly should not discuss the matter indiscreetly."

"And now the question is," said Teddy, "Where shall we dine, and what shall we do afterwards?"

We dined amid the glitter of lights and mirrors and fair faces and bright colours; a band thundering a waltz accompaniment to the soup, a mazurka to the fish, a babel of noises all round us—laughing voices, clattering silver, popping corks, stirring music; and ourselves getting rapidly into tune with all of this.

"By the way," I said in a nonchalant tone, "have you seen Miss Trevor-Hudson again?"

"No," said Teddy, carelessly, and yet with a slightly uncomfortable air.

"Did you become friends again? Pardon me if I am indiscreet."

"Hang it, D'Haricot!" he

exclaimed, "I'm off women—for good this time."

"Then she was—what shall I say?"

"She kept me hanging on for a week," confessed Teddy, "and then suddenly accepted old Horley."

"Horley—the stout baronet? Why, he might be her father!"

"So Miss Horley thinks, I believe," grinned Teddy. "His family are sick as dogs about it."

"And hers?"

"Oh, Sir Henry has twenty thousand a-year; they're quite pleased."

I smiled cynically at this.

"I say, have you got over your own penshant, as you call it, for the lady?" asked Teddy.

"My dear fellow," I said lightly, "these affairs do not trouble me long. I give you a toast, Teddy: Here is to man's best friend—a short memory!"

"And blow the expense!" added Teddy, somewhat irrelevantly, but with great enthusiasm.

"A short life and a merry one!" I exclaimed.

"Kiss 'em all, and no heel-taps!" cried Teddy. "Waiter! another bottle; and move about a little quicker, will you! Getting that gentleman's soup, were you? Well, don't do it again—d'ye hear?"

At this moment a piercing cry reached us from the other side of the room. It sounded like an elementary attempt to pronounce two words,—“Hey, Teddy! Hey, Teddy!”—and to be composed of several voices. We looked across and saw four or five young men,

most of them on their feet, and all waving either napkins or empty bottles. On catching my friend's eye their enthusiasm redoubled, and on his part he became instantly excited.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed. "Excuse me one minute."

He rushed across the room, and I could see that he was the recipient of a most hilarious greeting. Presently he came back in great spirits.

"I say, we're in luck's way," he said. "I'd quite forgotten this was the night of the match."

It then appeared that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge had been playing a football match that afternoon, and that on the evening of the encounter it was an ancient custom for these seats of learning to join in an amicable celebration of the event.

"The very thing we want," said Teddy. "Come on and join these men—old pals of mine, dashed good chaps and regular sportsmen. Come on!"

"But," I protested, as I let him lead me to these 'regular sportsmen,' "I am neither of Oxford nor Cambridge."

"Oh, that doesn't matter. Hi!" (this was to call the attention of his friends to my presence) "Let me introduce Mr Black of Brasenose, Mr Brown of Balliol, Mr Scarlett of Magdalen, Mr White of Christchurch. This is my honourable and accomplished friend, Mr Juggins of Jesus!"

At this there was a roar of welcome and a universal shout of "Good old Juggins!"

"But indeed my friend flatters me!" I exclaimed. "I have not the honour to be the Jesus Juggins."

No use in disclaiming my new name, however. Juggins of Jesus I remained for the rest of that evening, and there was nothing for it but to live up to the character. And I soon found that it was not difficult. All I had to do was to shout whenever Mr Scarlett or Mr Black shouted, and wave my napkin in imitation of Mr White or Mr Brown. No questions were asked regarding my degree or the lectures I attended, and my perfect familiarity with Jesus College seemed to be taken for granted. I do not wish to seem vain-glorious, but I cannot help thinking that I produced a favourable impression on my new friends.

"Juggins won the match for us," shouted Mr White. "Good old Juggins!"

"I did indeed. *Vive la* football! I won it by an innings and a goal!" I cried, adopting what I knew of their athletic terms.

"Juggins will make us a speech! Good old Juggins!" shouted Mr Black.

"Fellow-students!" I replied, rising promptly at this invitation, "my exploits already seem known to you, better even than to myself. How I hit the wicket, kick the goal, bowl the hurdle, and swing the oar, what need to relate? Good old Juggins indeed! I give you this health—to my venerable college of Jesus, to the beloved colleges of you all, to

my respectable and promising friend, Lumme, to the goal-post of Oxford, to love, to wine, to the Prince of Wales!"

Never was a speech delivered with more fervour or received with greater applause. After that I do not think they would have parted with me to save themselves from prison. And indeed it very nearly came to that alternative more than once in the course of the evening.

We hailed two hansoms, and drove, three in each, and all of us addressing appropriate sentiments to the passers-by, to a music-hall which, as I am now making my *début* as a distinguished sportsman, I shall call the "Umpire." I shall not give its real name, as my share in the occurrences that ensued is probably still remembered by the management. It was, however, not unlike the title I have given it.

My head, I confess, was buzzing in the most unwonted fashion, but I remember quite distinctly that as we alighted from our cabs there was quite a crowd about the doors, all apparently making as much noise as they could, and that, as we pushed our way through, my eyes were fascinated by a bill bearing the legend, "NEPTUNE—the Amphibious Marvel! First appearance to-night! All records broken!" And I wondered in the seriously simple way one does wonder under such conditions, what in the world the meaning of this cryptogram might be.

We got inside,—and, my faith, the scene that met our eyes! Apparently the football

match was being replayed in the promenade and on the staircases of the Umpire. Three gigantic figures in livery—the "bowlers out" as they are termed—were dragging a small and tattered man by the head and shoulders while his friends clung desperately to his lower limbs. Round this tableau seethed a wild throng shouting "Oxford!" "Cambridge!" and similar war-cries, destroying their own and each other's hats, and moved apparently by as incalculable forces as the billows in a storm. On the stage a luckless figure in a grotesque costume was vainly endeavouring to make a comic song audible; and what the rest of the audience were doing or thinking I have no means of guessing.

"Oxford! To the rescue!" shouted Mr Black.

"Vive Juggins! Kick the football!" I cried, leading the onslaught and hurling myself upon one of the bowlers-out.

"Good old Juggins!" yelled my admirers as they followed my spirited example, and in a moment the house rang with my new name. "Juggins!" could, I am sure, have been heard for half-a-mile outside.

The uproar increased; more bowlers-out hurried to the rescue, and I, thanks to the efficient use of my fists and feet, found myself the principal object of their attention. Had it not been for the loyal support of my companions I know not what my fate would have been, but their attachment seemed to increase with each fresh enemy who assailed me.

At last, panting and dishevelled, my opera-hat flattened and crushed over my eyes, the lining of my overcoat hanging out in a long streamer like a flag of distress, I was dragged free by the united efforts of Mr White and Mr Scarlett, and for an instant had a breathing-space.

I could see that the curtain was down and the performance stopped; that many people had risen in their places and apparently were calling for the assistance of the police; and that from the number of liveries in the *mélée* the management were taking the rioters seriously in hand. In another moment two or three of these officials broke loose and bore down upon me with a shout of "That's 'im!"

"Bolt, Juggins!" cried Mr Scarlett. "We'll give you a start."

The two intrepid gentlemen placed themselves between me and my pursuers. I stood my ground for a minute, but seeing that nothing could withstand the onset of my foes, and that Mr White was already on the floor, I turned and fled. The chase was hot. I dashed down a flight of stairs, and then by a happy chance saw a door marked "private." Through it I ran, and was making my way I knew not whither, but certainly in forbidden territory, when I was confronted by an agitated stranger. I stopped, and would have raised my hat had it not been so tightly jammed upon my head.

The man looked at me for a

moment and then seemed to think he recognised my face.

"You are Mr Neptune?" said he.

"You have named me!" I cried, opening my arms and embracing him effusively.

"I am afraid you got into the crowd," said he, withdrawing in some embarrassment, I thought. "I suppose that is why you are late."

"That is the reason," I replied, feeling mystified indeed, but devoutly thankful that he did not recognise me as the hunted Juggins.

"Well," he said, "you had better go on at once if you don't mind. There is rather a disturbance, I am afraid, and we have lowered the curtain, but perhaps your appearance may quiet them."

"My appearance?" I asked, glancing down at my torn overcoat, and wondering what sedative effect such a scarecrow was likely to have. Besides, I had appeared, and it had not quieted them—though this, of course, he did not know.

"I mean," he answered, "that the nature of your performance is so absorbing, that we hope it may rivet attention somewhat."

A light dawned upon me. I now remembered the bill outside the theatre. I was the "Amphibious Marvel"! Well, it would not do for the intrepid Juggins to refuse the adventure. For the honour of Jesus College I must endeavour to "break all records." My one hope was that, as it was to be my first appearance, anything strange in the nature of

my performance might be received merely as a diverting novelty.

"The stage is set for you," said my unknown friend. "How long will it take you to change?"

"Change?" I replied. "This is the costume in which I always perform."

He looked surprised, but also relieved that there would be no further delay; and presently I found myself upon a huge stage, the curtain down in front, and no one there but myself and my conductor. What was I expected to do? I was sufficiently expert at gymnastics to make some sort of show upon the trapeze without more than a reasonable chance of breaking my neck. But there was no sign of any such apparatus. Was I then a strong man? I had always had a grave suspicion that those huge cannon-balls and dumb-bells were really hollow, and in any case I could at least roll them about. But there were neither cannon-balls nor dumb-bells. No, there was nothing but a high and narrow box of glass.

"It is all right, you will find," said my conductor, coming up to this.

I also approached it and gave a gasp.

The box was filled with water—water about six feet deep!

"I shouldn't care to dive into it myself!" he said jocularly; "but I suppose it is all a matter of practice."

"Do I dive in—from the roof?" I asked, a little weakly I fear.

"Did you mean to?" he replied, evidently perturbed lest their arrangements had been insufficient.

"Not to-night," I said, with a sigh of relief. "But to-morrow night,—ah yes, you will see me then!"

He regarded me with undisguised admiration.

"You are all ready?" he asked.

"Quite," I replied.

We went into the wings and the curtain rose.

"I time you, of course," said my friend, taking out his watch. "You have stayed under five minutes in Paris, haven't you?"

I had discovered my vocation at last. The Amphibious Neptune was a record-breaking diver!

"Ten," I answered carelessly; and with such an air as I thought appropriate to my reputation, I walked on to the stage.

"Gentlemen and ladies!" shouted my friend, coming up to the footlights. "This is the world-famed Neptune, who has repeatedly stayed under water for periods of from eight to ten minutes! He is rightly styled——"

But at this point his voice was lost in such an uproar as, I flatter myself, greets the appearance of few Umpire artistes. "Good old Juggins!" they shouted, "Good old Juggins!" I was recognised now, and I must live up to my reputation as the high-spirited representative of Jesus College, Oxford. Kissing my hand to my cheering audience, I mounted the steps placed against the end

of the tank, and with a magnificent splash leapt into the water,—I cannot strictly say I dived, for on surveying the constricted area of my aquatic operations it seemed folly to risk cracking a valuable head.

Unluckily I had omitted in my enthusiasm to remove even my top-coat, and either in the air or the water (I cannot say which) I drove my feet through the torn lining. Conceive now the situation into which my recklessness had plunged me—entangled in my overcoat at the bottom of six feet of water, struggling madly to free myself, with only a sheet of transparent glass between me and as dry a stage as any in England; drowning ridiculously in clear view of a full and enthusiastic house! My struggles can only have lasted for a few seconds, though to me they seemed longer than the ten minutes I had boasted of, and then—the good God be thanked!—I felt the side of my prison yield to

my kicking, and in another moment I was seated in three inches of water, dizzily watching a miniature Niagara sweep the stage and foam over the footlights into the panic-stricken orchestra.

“Down with the curtain!” I heard some one cry from behind, but before it had quite descended the Amphibious Marvel had smashed his way out of his tank and leapt into the unwilling arms of the double-bass.

Ah! that was a night to be remembered—though not, I must frankly admit, to be repeated. Another *mêlée* with the exasperated musicians; a gallant rescue by Teddy and his friends; a triumphant exit from the Umpire borne on the shoulders of my cheering admirers: all the other events of that stirring night still live in the memory of Good Old Jug-gins. To my fellow undergraduates of an evening I dedicate this happy, disreputable reminiscence.

III.

“So you pushed that little snowball from the top? And now it has reached the bottom and become quite large? My faith, how surprising!”—LA RABIDE.

I am alone in my room bending over my writing-table, endeavouring to relieve my depression upon paper. Since my appearance upon the music-hall stage I have enjoyed the society of my Oxford friends while they remained in town; I have revelled with Teddy; I have had my “burst”; and now the reaction has come. Even the solace of my most real

and intimate friend, Dick Shaft-head, is denied me, for he has apparently left London for a time. At any rate his rooms are shut up and he is not there.

Just then came a tap at the door, followed by the comely face of Aramatilda.

“A lady to see you, sir,” she said.

“Who is she?” I asked indifferently.

"She didn't give her name, sir."

"Show her in," I replied, closing my journal, but repeating its last words to myself.

Again the door opened. I rose from my seat.

"Are you Mr D'Haricot?"

She was rather small: she was young, not more than two-and-twenty. She had a very fresh complexion and a pretty, round little face, saved from any dolliness by the steadiness of her blue eyes, the firmness of her mouth, and the expression of quiet self-possession. She reminded me of some one, though for the moment I could not think who.

"I am Mr D'Haricot," I replied. "And you?"

"I am Miss Shafthead."

"Dick's sister!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," she said, with a pleasant glimpse of smile that accentuated the resemblance. "Have you seen him lately?"

"Unfortunately no."

She gave me a quick clear glance as if to test my truth, and then, as though she were satisfied, went on in the same quiet and candid voice,—

"I tried to find my cousin, Teddy Lumme, but as he was out I have taken the liberty of calling on you, because I know you are one of Dick's friends—and because"—she hesitated, though without any embarrassment, and gave me the same kind of glance again: just such a look as Dick would have given, translated into a woman's eye.

"Is anything the matter?" I asked quickly.

"Yes," she said. "He has

left home, and we don't know where he is."

"What has happened?" I exclaimed.

"He has told you of Agnes Grey, I think?" she answered.

"He has given me his confidence."

"Dick came home a few days ago and became engaged to her. My father was angry about it, and now they have gone away."

She told me this in the same quiet straightforward way, looking straight at me in a manner more disconcerting than any suggestion of reproach.

It was I who had urged him, exhorted him to this reckless deed! And evidently she knew what my counsel had been. I could have shot myself before her eyes if I had thought that step would have mended matters.

"Then they have run away together!" I cried.

"They have gone away," she repeated quietly. "And I suppose together. I am afraid my father was very hard on them both."

"And doubtless you have learned what ridiculous advice I gave him?"

"Yes," she replied. "Dick told me."

"And now you abhor me?"

"I should be much obliged if you would help me to find them," she answered, still keeping her steady eyes upon my distracted countenance.

"I ask your pardon," I said.

"It is help you want, not my regrets—though I assure you I feel them. Have you been to his chambers?"

"Yes; I went and knocked, but I could get no answer."

"Perhaps they—I should say he—has returned by now. I shall go at once and see."

"Thank you," she replied, still quietly, but with a kinder look in her eyes.

"And you—will you wait here?"

"Oh, I shall come too, of course," she said, and somehow I found this announcement pleasing.

As we drove together towards the Temple, I learned a few more particulars of Dick's escapade. When he told his father his intention of marrying Miss Grey, the indignation of the baronet evidently knew no bounds, for even his daughter admitted that he had been less than courteous to poor Agnes, and what he had said to Dick was discreetly left to my imagination. This all happened yesterday. Agnes had retired weeping to her bedroom, and Dick swearing towards the stables. The orders he gave the coachman were only discovered afterwards; but his plans were well laid, for it was not till the culprits were missing at dinner that any one discovered they had only waited till darkness fell, and then driven straight to the station. No message was left, no clue to their whereabouts. You can picture the state of mind the family were thrown into!

Morning came, but no letter with it, and by the middle of the day Miss Shafthead could stand the suspense no longer; so in the same business-like

fashion as Dick, without a word to her parents, she had started in pursuit. The aunt she proposed to spend the night with was not as yet informed that she was to have a visitor: business first, and, till that was accomplished, my fair companion was simply letting fate take care of her.

"With fate's permission, I shall assist," I said to myself.

As we drew near to the Temple she fell silent, and I felt sure that, despite her air of *sangfroid*, her sisterly heart was beating faster.

"Do you think they—I mean he—will have returned?" she said to me suddenly as we walked across the quiet court.

"Sooner or later he is sure to be in—if he is in London. May I ask you to say nothing as we ascend the stairs, and to permit me to make the inquiries?"

She gave her consent in a glance, and we tramped up the old wooden staircase till we stopped in silence before Dick's door. These chambers of the Temple are unprovided with any bells or other means of calling the inmate's attention beyond the simple method of knocking. If the heavy outer door of oak be closed, and he away from home or disinclined to receive you, you may knock all afternoon without getting any satisfaction; and it was the latter alternative I feared. At this juncture I could imagine circumstances under which my friend might prefer to remain undisturbed.

For a moment I listened,

and I was sure I could hear a movement inside. Then I knocked loudly, — no answer. I knocked again, but still no answer.

"Stay where you are, and make no sound," I whispered to my companion. "Like the badger, he must be drawn."

I fumbled at the letter-slit in the door as though I was the postman endeavouring to introduce a packet, and dropped my pocket-book on the floor outside. This I knew to be the habit of these officials when a newspaper proved too bulky. Then, quietly picking up the pocket-book, I descended the stairs with as much noise as possible till I thought I was out of hearing, when I turned and ran lightly up again. Just as I was quietly approaching the top of the flight, I saw the door open and the astonished Dick confront his sister. I stopped.

"Daisy!" he exclaimed in a tone which seemed to be made up of several emotions.

"Dick!" she replied, her self-control just failing to keep her voice quite steady.

"Was it you who knocked?" he asked more suspiciously than kindly.

"No, Dick; it was I who took that liberty," I answered, continuing my ascent.

He turned with a start, for he had not seen me.

"You?" he said sharply. "It was a dodge, then, to——"

"To induce you to break from cover. Yes, my friend, to such extremities have you driven us."

"In what capacity have you

come?" he asked with ominous coolness.

"As 'friends,'" I replied. "Friends who have come to place ourselves at your service. Haven't we, Miss Shafthead?"

"Yes," said she, "we are friends. Don't you believe me, Dick?"

"Who sent you?" he asked.

"I came myself."

"Does my father know?"

"No."

Dick's manner changed.

"It's very good of you, Daisy. Unfortunately"—here he hesitated in some embarrassment—"unfortunately I am engaged. I mean I have some one with me."

At this crisis Miss Daisy rose to the occasion in a way that surprised me, even though I had done little but admire her spirit since we met.

"Of course," she replied with a smile. "I was sure you would have, Dick, and I want to see you both."

"Come in then," he said.

"And I?" I asked with a becoming air of diffidence.

"As I acted on your advice," he answered, "you'd better see what you've done."

We entered, and there standing in the lamplight we saw the cause of all this mischief. She was a little slender figure with a pretty little oval face, in which two very soft brown eyes made a mute appeal for sympathy. There was something about her air, something about her demure expression, something about the simplicity of her dress and the Puritan fashion in which she wore her hair, that gave one an in-

describably quaint and old-fashioned impression; and this impression was altogether pleasant. When she opened her lips, and in a voice that, I know not how, heightened this effect, and with an expression of sweetness and contrition, said simply, "Daisy, what must you think?" I forgot all my worldly wisdom, and was ready, if necessary, to egg her lover on to still more gallant courses. Daisy herself, however, capitulated more tardily. She did not, as I hoped, rush into the charming little sinner's arms, but only answered, kindly indeed, yet as if holding her judgment in reserve,—

"I haven't heard what has happened yet."

I gave a sign to Dick to be discreet in answering this inquiry, which he, however, read as merely calling attention to my presence."

"Oh, let me introduce, Mr D'Haricot — Miss Grey," he said.

So she was still Miss Grey, and they had fled together nearly four-and-twenty hours ago. I repeated my signal to be careful in making admissions.

"Where have you been?" said Daisy.

"I have some cousins—some cousins of my father's—in London," Agnes answered. "I am staying with them."

"And you are living here," I said to Dick.

"Where else?" he replied with a surprise that was undoubtedly genuine.

"The arrangement is prudence itself," I pronounced.

"You see, Miss Shafthead, that these young people have tempered their ardour with a discretion we had scarcely looked for. I do not know what you intend to do; but for myself, I kiss Miss Grey's hand and place my poor services at her disposal!"

And I proceeded to carry out the more immediately possible part of this resolution without further delay.

The little mademoiselle was evidently affected by my act of salutation, while Dick exclaimed with great cordiality—

"Good old monsieur. By Jove, you're a sportsman!"

Still his sister hung back: in fact, my impetuosity seemed to have rather a damping effect upon her.

"What are you going to do, Dick?" she asked.

"We are going to get married."

"What, at once?"

"Almost immediately."

"Without father's consent?"

"After what he said to us both—to Agnes, in particular—do you think I am going to trouble about his opinion?"

"But, Dick, supposing we can get him to change his mind?"

"Who is going to change it for him, for he won't do it himself? I know the governor well enough for that."

"If I try to, will you wait for a little?"

"It's no use," said Dick.

"Wait till we see, Dick!"

"Yes, we shall wait," said Agnes. "Dick, you will wait, won't you?"

"If you insist," replied Dick, though not very cordially.

"Then you will try?" said Agnes.

Daisy came to her side, took her hand, and kissed her at last.

"Oh yes, I'll do my very best!" she exclaimed.

There followed one of those little displays of womanly affection that are so charming yet so tantalising when one stands outside the embraces and thinks of the improvement that might be effected by a transposition of either of the actors.

"What will you say?" asked Dick in a minute.

"I don't quite know," replied Daisy candidly. "I suppose I had better say that——"

She paused as if considering.

"Say that this is one of the matches made in heaven!" I cried. "Say that not even a father has the right to stand between two people who love each other as these do!"

"By Gad! Daisy," said Dick, "you ought to take the monsieur with you. I don't believe there'd be any resisting him."

"Let me come!" I exclaimed.

"I claim the privilege. My rash counsels helped to cause this situation; permit me to try and make the atonement!"

Daisy looked at me, I am bound to say, rather doubtfully.

"He has a wonderful way with him," urged Dick. "We can't do that kind of eloquent appeal to the feelings business in England, but it fetches us if it's properly managed. You see I don't want to fall out with the governor. I know, Daisy, what a good sort he has been—but I am not going to give up Agnes."

"If you think Mr D'Haricot would really do any good," said Daisy.

"He can but try," I broke in.

"Please let him," said Agnes softly.

Ah, I had not shown her my devotion in vain!

"All right," said Daisy.

And so it was arranged that we were to start upon our embassy next morning.

IV.

"High Toryism, High Churchism, High Farming, and old port for ever."—CORLETT.

That evening when I came to meditate in solitude upon the appeal I purposed to make, my confidence began to evaporate in the most uncomfortable manner. Was I quite certain that I should be pleading a righteous cause? Ah, yes; I had gone too far now to question my cause: but how would my eloquence be received? Would it "fetch if

properly managed"? I tried to picture the baronet, and the more fancy laid on the colours, the more damping the prospect became.

"Ah, well, Providence must guide me," I said to myself at last. And in a way that I am sufficiently old-fashioned—superstitious—call it what you will—to think more than mere coincidence, Providence re-

sponded to my faith. I could scarcely guess that my friend the old General¹ who came in to smoke a pipe with me was an agent employed by Heaven, but so he proved.

"I want your advice," I said. "What should I say, what should I do, under the following perplexing circumstances?"

And without giving him any names I told him the story of Dick.

"Difficult business, *mossoo*, delicate affair, and that sort of thing," he observed when I had finished. "You say your friend is a pretty obstinate young fellow?"

"Dick Shafthead is obstinacy itself," I replied, letting his name escape by a most fortunate slip of the tongue.

"Shafthead?" said the General. "By Jove, any relation to Sir Philip Shafthead?"

"Since you know his name and can be trusted not to repeat it, I may as well tell you that Sir Philip is the stern father in question. Do you know him?"

"Knew his other son, Major Shafthead. He is the heir, isn't he?"

"Yes," I said. "Dick is the second son."

"Ever met Tommy Shafthead—as we called him—the Major, I mean?"

"No; he is stationed abroad, I believe."

"Heard about *his* marriage?"

"No," I replied. "Dick has seldom mentioned him."

"I wonder if he knows," said the General.

"What?" I asked.

"About Tommy's marriage."

"Is there a mystery?"

"Well," said the General, "it's a matter that has been kept pretty quiet; but in case it may be any good to you to know, I might as well tell you. Tommy was in my old regiment—that's how I know all about it. When he was only a subaltern he got mixed up with a girl much beneath him in station. His friends tried to get him out of it, but he was like your friend, pig-headed as the devil. He married her privately, lived with her for a year, found he'd made a fool of himself, and separated for good."

"They were divorced?" I asked.

"No such luck," said the General. "He can't get rid of her. She's behaving herself properly for the sake of getting the title, and naturally she's not going to divorce him. So that's what comes of marrying in haste, *mossoo*. Not that there isn't a good deal to be said for a young fellow who has—er—a warm heart and wants to do the right thing by the girl, and so forth. I am no Chesterfield, *mossoo*; right's right and wrong's wrong all the world over, but—er—there are limits, don't you know."

"Has Major Shafthead any family?" I inquired.

"No," said the General.

¹ Mentioned earlier in these memoirs as living in the same house with M. D'Haricot.—TRANSLATOR.

"Then Dick will succeed to the baronetcy one day?"

"Or his son."

"Ah," I reflected, "I see now why Sir Philip is so stern. He would not have a girl he dislikes the mother of future baronets, and he will not allow the younger son to follow, as he thinks, in the elder's steps!"

At first sight this seemed only to increase my difficulties, but as I thought more over it, my spirits began to rise. Yes, I might make out a good case for Dick out of this buried story.

"Well, good night, mossos," said the old boy rising. "Good luck to you."

"And many thanks to you, General."

The next morning broke very cold and grey. We were well advanced in December, and the frost was making us his first visit for the winter: indeed it was cold enough to give Miss Daisy the opportunity of looking charming in a fur coat when I met her at the station. Dick came to see us off, and I must admit that I felt more responsibility than I quite liked in seeing the cheerful confidence he reposed in me.

"It is but a chance that I can do anything," I reminded him. "I may fail."

"No fear," he replied. "I expect a pardon by return of post. By the way, we got the manor of Helmscote in Edward the Third's time — Edward the Third, remember, and the baronetcy after Blenheim. The governor doesn't object to be reminded of that kind of thing if you do it

neatly. But you know the trick."

"I should rather depend on your sister's eloquence," I suggested.

"Oh, she's like me; can't stand on her hind-legs and catch cake," laughed Dick.

"We are plain English."

"Not so very plain," I said to myself, glancing at my travelling companion's fresh little face nestling in a collar of fur.

She was very silent this morning, and I could now see that the experiment of taking down an advocate inspired her with considerably less confidence than it had Dick.

"Confess the truth, Miss Shafthead," I said to her at last. "You fear I shall only make bad into worse?"

"I don't know what you will do," she replied, with a smile that was rather nervous than encouraging.

"Command me, then; I shall say what you please, or hold my tongue if you prefer it."

"Oh no," she said; "you had better say something — now that you have come with me; only don't be too sentimental, please."

"I shall talk turnips till I see my opportunity; then I shall observe coldly that Richard is an affectionate lad in spite of his faults."

Daisy laughed.

"I think I hear you," she replied.

Well, at least my jest served to make her a little more at her ease, and we now fell to planning our arrival. She had left a note before she started for

town, saying only that she would be away for the night, but giving no intimation of when she might return, so that we expected no carriage at the station. This we decided was all the better. We should walk to Helmscote, attract as little notice as possible on entering the house, and then she would find out how the land lay before even announcing my presence—at least, if it were possible to keep me in the background so long.

"My father is rather difficult sometimes," she said.

"Hasty?" I asked.

"I'm afraid so."

"He may then decline to receive me?"

"It is quite possible."

The adventure began to assume a more and more formidable aspect. I agreed that great circumspection was required.

At last we alighted at a little wayside station in the heart of the country. We were the only travellers who descended, and when we had come out into a quiet road and watched the train grow smaller and smaller and rumble more and more faintly, till the arms of the signals had all risen behind it, and the shining steel lines stretched still and uninhabited through the fields, we saw no sign of life beyond a cawing flock of rooks. The sun was bright, the hoar-frost only lay under the shadow of the hedgerows, and not a breath of wind stirred the bare branches of the trees. After a word of protest I took the fur coat over my arm and Daisy's bag in my hand, and we set out at a brisk

pace to cover the two miles before us.

Presently a sleepy little village appeared ahead of us, but before we reached it my guide turned off to the left.

"It is a little longer round this way," she said; "but I am afraid the people in the village might—well——"

"Exactly," I replied. "We are a secret embassy."

It was a narrow lane we were now in, winding in the shade of high beech-trees, and littered with their brown cast leaves. Whether it was the charm of the place, or that we instinctively delayed the crisis now that it was so near, I cannot say, but gradually our pace slackened.

"I am afraid they will be rather anxious about me," said Daisy.

"If they value you as they ought," I replied.

She smiled a little, and then in a minute we rounded a corner, and she said, "That is Helmscote we see through the trees."

I looked and saw a pile of chimneys and gables close before us, and just a little distance removed from the lane. Along that side now ran a high ancient looking wall, with a single door in it opposite the house. Evidently this unostentatious postern was a back entrance, and the gates must open into some other road.

My fellow-ambassador paused and glanced in both directions, but there was no sign of any one but ourselves.

"I think it will be best if I

leave you in the garden," she said, "while I go in and find mother."

"Yes; I think it will be wise," I answered.

She took out a key and opened the door in the wall, and I found myself in an old flower-garden screened by a high hedge of evergreens at the farther end.

"Give me my coat and bag," she said. "Many thanks for carrying them. Now just wait here. I shall be as quick as I can."

I lit a cigar and began to pace the gravel path, keeping myself concealed behind the bushes as far as I could. Decidedly this had a flavour of adventure, and the longer I paced the more did a certain restlessness of nerves grow upon me. I took out my watch. She had been gone ten minutes. Well, after all, I could scarcely expect her to return so soon as that. I paced and smoked again, and again took out my watch. Twenty minutes now, and no sign of my fellow-ambassador. I began to grow impatient, and also to feel less the necessity for caution. No one had discovered me so far, and no one was likely to; why should I not explore this garden a little further? I ventured down to the farther end, till I stood behind the hedge. It was charmingly quiet and restful and sunny, with high trees looking over the walls and rooks flapping and cawing about their tops, and a glimpse of the house beyond. This glimpse was so pleasing that

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I thought I should like to see more, and spying a garden-roller propped against the wall and a niche in the stones above it, I gave a wary look round, and in a moment more had scrambled up till my feet were in the niche and my head looking over the top.

Below me I saw a grass terrace and a broad walk, and beyond these the mansion of Helmscote. No wonder Dick showed a touch of pride and affection when (on very rare occasions, I admit) he had alluded to his home. It was an old brick house of the Tudor period, though some parts were apparently more ancient than that, and had been built, I should say, by the first Shafthead who had settled there. The colours—the red with diagonal designs of black bricks through it, the stone of the mullioned windows, the old tiles on the roof, the grey of the ancient portions, even, I fancied, the green ivy—had all been softened and harmonised by time and by weather till the whole house had become a rich scheme that would have defied the most cunning painter to imitate it.

"I know Dick better since I have seen his home," I said to myself. "And his sister? Yes; I think I know her better too, though not so well as I should like to. *Pardieu!* what has become of her?"

"Well, sir," said a voice behind me, "what are you doing there?"

I turned with a start, my grip of the wall slipped, and,

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with more precipitation than grace, I descended to the garden again to find myself confronted by a decidedly formidable individual. He was a gentleman of something over sixty years of age, but tall and broad and upright far beyond the common, and, even though his left arm was in a sling of black silk, I should not have cared to try conclusions with him. His face was ruddy and fresh, his features aristocratic and well marked, his eyes blue and very bright, and he was dressed in a shooting suit and leather leggings. The air of proprietorship, the wounded left arm, and the family resemblance left me in no doubt as to who he was. I was, in fact, about to enjoy the interview with Sir Philip Shafthead for the sake of which I had entered his garden.

Yet, strange though it may seem, gratitude for this stroke of good luck was not my first sensation.

"Who the devil are you, and what are you doing here, sir?" he repeated sternly.

He had not heard of my arrival then, and on the instant the thought struck me that, since he did not know who I was, I might make the experiment of feigning ignorance of him.

"I address a fellow-guest of Sir Philip's, no doubt?" I said with as easy an air as is possible for a man who has just fallen from the top of a wall where he had no business to have climbed.

"Fellow-guest?" he repeated.

"Do you mean to pretend you are visiting Helmscote?"

"I am about to; though I confess to you, sir, that Sir Philip is at present unaware of my intention."

"Indeed?" said he.

"Yes," I said. "You are doubtless a friend of Sir Philip's, sir?"

He emitted something that was between a laugh and an exclamation.

"More or less," he replied.

"And who are you?"

"My name is D'Haricot, and I am a friend of his son, Dick Shafthead."

He started perceptibly and looked at me with a different expression.

"I have heard your name," he said.

"As you are staying at Helmscote you have no doubt heard of Dick's imprudence?" I went on boldly.

"I have," he replied shortly. "Have you come to see Sir Philip about that?"

"Yes," I said, "I have travelled down with Miss Shafthead this morning. She left me here for a short time while she went in to see her parents, and while waiting I had the indiscretion to mount this wall in order to obtain a better view of the beautiful old house. It is the finest mansion I have seen in England. No wonder, sir, that Dick is so attached to his home!"

"Yet, as you are aware, he has run away from it," said the baronet drily.

"Ah," I said. "You have doubtless heard the father's view of his escapade. Will

you let me tell you the son's, while I am waiting?"

"Had you not better keep this for Sir Philip?—that is, if he consents to hear you."

"No," I said eagerly. "I have no secrets to tell, and if I can persuade you that Dick has some excuse for his conduct, perhaps you, too, might say a word to Sir Philip in his favour."

"It is unlikely," said the baronet. "But go on."

At that moment I spied Daisy entering the garden, though fortunately her father's back was towards her. Swiftly I made a signal for her to go away, and after an instant's astonished pause she turned and slipped quietly out again. I had been given a better chance than I had dared to hope for.

V.

"At the journey's end a welcome;
For the wanderer a friend!"

—*Cyrd.*

"Sir," I began, "I must tell you, in the first place, that there is this to be said for Dick Shafthead—and it is an argument he is too generous to use himself: he took counsel of a friend who, perhaps rashly, urged him to follow the dictates of his heart."

"Indeed?" said the baronet.

"Yes, I can answer for it, because I was that friend; and that is one of the reasons why I was so eager to plead for him with Sir Philip."

"It sounds a damned poor one," said he. "May I ask why you advised a son to rebel against his father?"

"If I had thought his father would regard his marrying the girl he loved as an act of rebellion I might—though I do not say I would—have advised him otherwise. But he had told me that Sir Philip was a man of great sense and understanding, therefore I argued that he would not take a narrow or prejudiced——"

"Prejudiced!" he exclaimed.

"Or a prejudiced view of his son's conduct. I knew he was a good churchman; therefore, as a follower of a carpenter's son, he could not seriously let any blemish on a girl's pedigree stand between his son and himself. Besides, he was so highly placed that an alliance with his family would be sufficient to ennoble. Furthermore, as he loves his son, he would wish for nothing so much as his happiness. Lastly, being a great gentleman, Sir Philip would give a lady's case every consideration."

But at this the baronet's feelings could no longer be contained.

"By God, sir!" he exclaimed, "do you mean to say you preached this damnable sermon to my—to Dick Shafthead?"

I had not preached this sermon, nor anything very much like it, but these were undoubtedly the arguments I ought to have used.

"I argued from what he had told me of his father," I replied. "If I am incorrect in my estimate of Sir Philip,—if he is not a Christian, a gentleman, an affectionate father, and a man of sense,—then indeed I reasoned wrongly."

At this thrust beneath his guard Sir Philip was silent, and I hastened to follow up my attack.

"Another argument I used, and it seemed to me the strongest, was this, that as Dick had told me of the deep affection Sir Philip felt for Lady Shafthead, I knew his father had a heart which could love a woman devotedly, and he had but to turn back the pages of his own life to find himself reading the same words as his son."

"Sir Philip loved a lady of his own degree and station," he answered.

"And Dick a relative of that lady," I said; "a girl with the same blood in her veins, and a character which no one can impeach. Can Sir Philip?"

"Her character is beside the point," said he.

"Dick's father would not say so of his son's wife," I retorted.

Again the baronet seemed at a loss for an answer, and from his expression I think he was on the point of revealing his identity and sending me forthwith to the devil, but without a pause I hurried up the rest of my artillery.

"Even if Sir Philip remains deaf to all that I have hitherto said, there yet remains this, which must at least make him pause. He will be losing a son."

"And the son will be losing his father."

"Yes; and therefore Sir Philip will not only be suffering, but inflicting, a misfortune."

"I may remind you, sir, that Dick has only to listen to reason."

"Dick's mind is made up; and can you, sir, who know these Shaftheads, expect them to abandon their resolutions so easily? From whom has he inherited his firmness and tenacity? From his father, of course; and he from that long line of ancestors who have made the name of Shafthead honourable since the days of Edward the Third! The warrior who was ennobled on the field of Blenheim has not left descendants of milk-and-water!"

"I am perfectly aware that Dick is obstinate as the devil," replied the baronet, but this time in a tone that seemed to have in it a trace of something not unlike satisfaction.

"And so, sir, his father will be ruthlessly discarding a second daughter-in-law."

At these words the change that came over the baronet was so sudden and violent that I almost repented of having uttered them.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed in a stifled voice. "Dick didn't tell you? He does not know!"

"No," I replied. "I learned it through an old companion in arms of Major Shafthead."

For a moment there was a pause.

Then he said in a steadier voice—

"And does this seem to you an argument for permitting another son to commit an act of folly?"

"It does seem an argument for not breaking the last link with the generation to come."

The baronet turned round and walked a few paces away from me; then he turned back and said—

"Well, sir, if it is any satisfaction to you, I may tell you that you have already discharged your task. I am Sir Philip Shafthead."

"What!" I exclaimed in simulated surprise. "Then I must indeed ask your pardon for the freedom with which I have spoken. My affection for your son is my only excuse."

"He is fortunate in his friends, sir," said Sir Philip, though with precisely what significance I could not be sure. "You will now have luncheon with us, I hope."

We walked in silence to the house, my host's face expressing nothing of what he thought or felt.

In a long, low room, whose oak panelling and beams were black with age, and whose windows tinged the sunshine with the colours of old coats of arms, I was introduced to Lady Shafthead. She was like her daughter, smaller and slighter than the muscular race of Shaftheads, grey-haired, and very charming and simple in her manner. Daisy stood beside her, and both women glanced anxiously from one to the other of us. What those who knew him could read in Sir Philip's countenance I can-

not say. For myself I merely professed my entire readiness for lunch and my appreciation of Helmscote, but surreptitiously catching Daisy's eye, I gave her a glance that was intended to indicate a fair possibility of fine weather.

Evidently she read it as such, for she replied by a smile from which all her distrust had vanished.

The meal passed off in outward calm and with no reference to the conversation of the morning. Indeed Sir Philip scarcely spoke at all, and I was too afraid of making a discordant remark to say much myself.

"You will excuse me from joining you in the smoking-room at present," said the baronet, when we had finished. "Daisy, you will act as hostess perhaps?"

Nothing could have suited me better than this arrangement, and for an hour we discussed our embassy and its prospects with the friendliness of two intimates who have shared an adventure.

Then Lady Shafthead entered and said with a smile towards us both—

"Sir Philip has written to Dick."

"He is forgiven?" I cried.

"He is told to come home."

"Alone?"

"Yes, alone."

My face fell for a little, but Lady Shafthead's air reassured me.

"For the present, at all events, alone," she said.

"And may the present be brief!" I replied. "And now

his ambassador must regretfully return to town."

"Oh, but you are staying with us, I hope," said Lady Shafthead.

"With one collar, a tweed suit, and no razors?"

"Can't you send for your things?" suggested Daisy.

And that is precisely what I did.

The next day the prodigal returned, and had a long interview with his stern parent. At the end of it he joined me in the smoking-room.

"Well?" I asked.

"An armistice is declared," said Dick. "For six months the matter is not to be mentioned."

"And that is all?"

"All at present."

"But six months, Dick! Can you wait?"

"Call it three weeks," said Dick. "I know the limit to the governor's patience. He never let a matter remain unsettled for one month in his life."

He filled his pipe deliberately, standing with his legs wide apart and his broad back to the fire, while an expression of amused satisfaction gathered upon his good-looking countenance.

"I say," he remarked abruptly, "don't think I'm ungrateful. You did the trick, monsieur, and I won't forget it in a hurry."

As he said this he turned his back to me and took a match-box from the mantelshelf, as though he had merely made a casual remark about the weather, but by this time I

knew the value of such unemonstrative British thanks.

Another condition that Sir Philip had made was that his son should not return to London until the Christmas vacation was over; and though this was merely a matter of two or three weeks, Dick found it harder than a six months' postponement of his marriage. But to me, I fear, it did not seem so unreasonable, for as he could not have his sweetheart's company, he insisted on retaining mine; so after a polite protest, which Lady Shafthead declared to be unnecessary and Daisy to be absurd, I settled down to spend my Christmas at Helmscote.

At that time there was no one else staying in the house, so that when I sat down at dinner that night, one of a friendly company of five, I felt as though I was a member of the family. And the Shaftheads on their part seemed bent on increasing this illusion. Once I cheerfully alluded to my exile,—cheerfully, because at that moment the thought had no sting.

"An exile?" said Lady Shafthead, smiling at me as a good mother might smile. "Not here, surely. You must not feel yourself an exile here."

And indeed I did not. For the first time since I landed in this country I felt no trace of strangeness, but almost as though I had begun to take root in the soil. Circumstances had not enabled me to enjoy any family life since I was a boy, and had I been given at that moment a free pardon

and a ticket to Paris, I should have said, "Wait, please, for a few months till I discover to which nation I really do belong. Here I am at home. Perhaps if I return I should now be lonely."

The very look of my room when I retired to bed impressed me further with this feeling. The fire was so bright, the curtains so warm, every little circumstance so soothing. I

drew up the blind and looked out of a latticed casement window into a garden bathed in moonlight, and my heart was filled with gratitude. Last thing before I went to sleep I remember seeing the firelight playing on the walls and mingling with a long ray from the moon, and the fantastic designs seemed to form themselves into letters making a message of welcome.

VI.

"Ordnance shot off without."—*Old Stage Direction.*

To-day we were to shoot pheasants. The baronet had his arm out of the sling for the first time, and this so raised his spirits that I felt sure Dick's six months' probation was already divided by two at least. Two friends were coming from a neighbouring house, and the other gun was to be my second, Tonks, who was expected to stay for the night. Presently he appeared, and greeted me with a friendly grin.

"You haven't got Lumme to fire at to-day," he remarked.

I drew him aside.

"Tonks," I said, "that incident is forgotten—also the cause of it. You understand?"

He had the uncomfortable perspicacity to glance over at Daisy as he replied—

"Right-O; I won't spoil any one's sport."

This game of pheasant-shooting is played in England with that gravity and seriousness that the Briton displays in all his sports. No preparations are

wanting, no precautions omitted. You stand in a specially prepared opening in a specially grown plantation, while a specially trained company of beaters scientifically drive towards you several hundred artificially incubated birds invigorated by a patent pheasant food. Owing to the regulated height of the trees and the measured distance at which you stand, these birds pass over you at such a height (and owing to the qualities of the patent food, at such a pace) that the shot is rendered what they call "sporting." Then at a certain distance from his gun and a certain angle the skilful marksman discharges both barrels, converts two pheasants into collapsed bundles of feathers, snatches a second gun from an attendant, and in precisely similar fashion accounts for two more. The flight of the bird is so calculated that the bad shot has little chance of hitting anything at all, so that the pheasant may return to his coop and be

preserved intact for another day. When such a shot is firing you will hear the host anxiously say to the keeper at the end of the day—

"Did he miss them all clean?"

And if the answer is in the affirmative, he will add—

"Excellent! I shall ask him to shoot again."

A clean miss or a clean kill, that is what is demanded in order that you may strictly obey the rules of the sport; and at my first stand, where I was able to exhibit five severed tails, a mangled mass which had received both barrels at three paces, and seven swiftly running invalids, my enthusiasm was quickly damped by the face Sir Philip pulled on hearing my prowess.

"Never mind," said Daisy, who had come to see the sport; "you couldn't expect to get into it just at first."

"Come and give me instruction," I implored her.

"Don't be in such a hurry!" she cried, as she stood beside me at the next beat. "Look before you shoot—that's what Dick always says you ought to do. Now you've forgotten to put in your—wait! Of course! No wonder nothing happened; you had forgotten to put in the cartridges. Steady now. Oh, but don't wait till it's past you! Dick says—Good shot! Was that the bird you aimed at?"

"Mademoiselle, it was the bird a far-seeing Providence placed within the radius of my shot. 'L'homme propose; Dieu dispose.'"

"I shouldn't trust to Providence *too* much," said she.

Well, between Heaven and Miss Shafthead, aided, I must say for myself, by a hand and eye that were naturally quick and not unaccustomed to exercise of skill, I managed by the end of the day to successfully uphold the honour of my country.

* * * * *
At night the same welcoming chamber and a fire as bright as before. Next morning I am severely left alone. Dick has been summoned by his father. Half an hour passes, and then with an air of triumph he returns.

"You'll have to look after yourself to-day, monsieur," he says. "I'm off to town to bring her back with me."

"Her!" So the stern parent has relented, and some day in the distant future I suppose Agnes Grey will be Lady Shafthead and rule this house. What Dick added regarding my own share in this issue I need not repeat, though I confess it will always be a satisfaction for me to think of one headlong performance, unguided even by Halfred, which resulted so prosperously.

THE ELEVATION OF THOMAS ATKINS.

EVERY advance in military tactics has been dictated by the improvement in the weapon available—from the cross-bow and arquebus to the Mauser. It was the events of the Austro-Prussian war in 1866 that first opened men's minds to the overwhelming effect of the breechloader. Then followed the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, when the revelation was further confirmed, though not to any extent, owing to the inferiority of the Chassepot rifle, the recoil of which was too violent; leaving the Prussians still unconvinced, till the loss before St Privat, where the Prussian Guard was nearly annihilated, brought the truth home to them. Seven years later the Russo-Turkish war taught soldiers that the only way to resist its power was to intrench themselves, so they were loaded with tools with which to scrape out trenches. And it has remained for the Boer in the late war to effect a still further tactical change, by putting an independent, intelligent man behind the rifle, and so dissolving soldiers, fighting in mass under one guiding mind, into a host of scattered units. So we must conform to the occasion and put intelligence behind our rifles.

But the intelligence we seek must not be blind or unreasoning: it must be that of the individual whom training has pointed out as fit to be intrusted with independent action

when he finds himself away from a guiding voice. As it was put in the 'Tactical Retrospect' published after the Franco-Prussian war: "An army that cannot venture to trust in the individual work of its soldiers cannot reckon on the advantages to be derived from the operation of the breechloader. In the wars of the future the decisive element will not be brute force but rather intellect, not only on the part of the leader but from him down to the last soldier, and each individual will weigh in the scale according to the whole value of his intellectual individuality."

The man we want is to be found, but we must look for him a little higher in the social scale than we have done. In our younger days, not very long ago, the best of our soldiers were the lads we enticed from the plough-tail,—raw, agricultural labourers who had to work hard for a living, humble and respectful to their betters, and possessed of the smallest pittance of brains. Such men served us as soldiers so long as their duties were condensed into the formula, "Do this, and he doeth it." When a man was brought before his officer for some trifling offence and excused himself by urging that he "thought he had to do it," the suggestion was met by the regulation answer, "You are not paid to think!" as indeed he was not.

Now we look higher up the scale, and hanker after lads whose parents hope that their son may settle down as a clerk or behind a counter. I doubt if any inducement the army can offer will attract the yeoman's or the farmer's son: the race is diminishing fast; the town swallows up the most that is left. When a boy's choice lies between a counter in a shop and the freer life of a soldier, with its possibilities of seeing foreign lands, with, perhaps, a glimpse of a battle thrown in, it is more than likely he will choose the latter. A young farmer forms a vital part of the land he has lived upon since he was a child; his is a free and a healthy life; there is much in it to rivet him to home and to the farm which his father and his father before him have cultivated: he looks upon "Sally Bottom" and the "Green Close" as old friends, and does not care to leave them. The lad first mentioned sees in his mind the army he has read about in many novels which deal with moving accidents "by flood and field," in which soldiers figure as heroes. Why should he not be another? — it will only take a little to decide him. His life hitherto, after leaving school, has been pleasant but uneventful: games, lads of his own age for company, enough to eat, the evenings spent in the pit of the theatre, in the reading-room at the Y.M.C.A., a walk out with his girl, a glass of beer for himself and of lemonade for his companion

before going home—the amusements were simple enough, and sufficed. But then his time was his own: he could get away from home and from the paternal eye whenever he liked; it was the freedom he enjoyed more than all else; and it is just this freedom that he will lose when he enlists.

Now, freedom is absence from restraint, in the mind as well as to the body: to men of little brains it means the ability to get away from authority; to the educated man, to do what he has to do without being told how to do it. It is evident that to the latter class life as it is in the army must be irksome to a degree: even when the soldier indulges in relaxation he must do so "by order." We do not speak here of life during a campaign, the conditions that hold good in the field and in barracks are so entirely different and call for an entirely different treatment. When many men are collected in one place it is necessary that things should go on according to some central authority, otherwise every man would order them to suit his individual tastes, and confusion would occur. But in the matter of relaxation or amusement the regulations might be slacked off so as to bring life in barracks more in touch with the life outside. This has been done of late by the authorities to a great extent, but a good deal more might be done by individual officers.

We will look in at the canteen, the soldiers' "public-

house" in barracks. At present it is only a "public-house," absolutely frigid in the welcome it extends to the soldier who is thirsty. It is a low, detached building on one side of the barrack-square, overlooked by the barracks themselves, tall, three-storeyed, dirty brick houses, with countless windows all painfully alike; every window open, the sashes pushed up to the same height, mathematically correct, every one of them staring out at the square as if to inspect whether it is in order; the gravel regulation size, not a stone larger than the other. Inside the room the same regularity. It is long and rather low; in the centre a circular "bar," upon it the beer-engines which glitter like gold: round the sides of the room, tables, all of the same pattern, the ordinary barrack type, scrubbed as nearly white as may be, the corners bound with iron; every table supported by iron trestles, painted black; while between them and the wall is a row of forms of the same unyielding barrack pattern. The room and its furniture are perfectly rigid in uniformity. A few men in various stages of unbuttonment, as to their tunics, are seated at a table on which are pewter pots, the beer supplied from the "bar" by a sergeant, evidently an old soldier, and several men in their shirt-sleeves, who work the beer-engines as if by word of command,—they are the only non-regulation articles in the place, and it is a relief to see them.

Should the soldier in search of relaxation be of a studious turn, the reading and recreation room opposite offers both to him: the name is painted in large white letters over a door which he enters and finds himself in a barrack-room, nothing more, — bare walls, whitewashed, floors scrupulously clean. If it is winter there will be a fire in the regulation grate, the regulation coal-box beside it looking like a black sarcophagus: to pay all respect to the fire, the room feels chilly. Several tables, the counterpart of those in the canteen, are drawn up down the middle flanked by benches; some newspapers, accurately folded and in line with the edge of the tables, are on them; everything is square and straight, so that to take up a paper looks as if it might be contrary to regulation. At the far end two soldiers are playing draughts; at the other is a bookcase, the books covered with brown paper, the titles written on the backs; most of them are very clean, a few only are black with thumb-marks.

At a desk in the corner sits a young soldier, evidently the librarian, who will tell the soldier, if he asks him, that all the men in the garrison are members, as a matter of course, on payment of 3d. per month, which is stopped from their pay; slightly larger subscriptions are deducted from non-commissioned officers. The room has a depressing look, as if it had resigned itself to literature against its will.

On inspection he finds that the books with the thumb-marks are all novels,—Mrs Henry Wood being by far the dirtiest, Dickens coming next, and Sir Walter Scott last of all: those with clean covers, a good miscellaneous collection, travels, popular science, and military works. The books, papers, and games, at which latter the soldier can also smoke, are recommended for purchase by a sub-committee of the men themselves: everything is done by the War Office for the soldier except comfort,—small trifles which give barrack-room life a touch of home.

The only way to find out what those trifles are is to put yourself in the man's place; to realise that the soldier is a man as you are yourself, with the same likes and dislikes. Take an example. If at your club, when you went in to read the papers, you were shown into a bare room with whitewashed walls, and a bench without a back to sit on, I think you would leave that club; and that is what the soldier does when he wants to read his paper: he reads it somewhere else where he can get a decently furnished room and a chair to sit on. And the same holds good with the canteen; it is his smoking-room.

Barrack-rooms need not be papered, but whitewash can be made more pleasing to the eye by the addition of a little blue-wash—say a broad band a little distance below the ceiling and round the windows; while some settles, like those we see near

the fire in farmhouses, will allow a man to read his paper in comfort.

But it is when he is taking his ease over his beer after the day is done that the man craves for some amusement: if he does not get it in barracks he will go outside to look for it,—probably in Barrack Street, which is the nearest. Let us take a walk through it, so as to judge of the class of amusement he will find there. It is narrower than most of the streets which have squeezed themselves round the barracks; crowded with soldiers smoking, laughing, talking together just to pass the time till they can drop into the public-house. One side of the street is bounded by the barrack wall, blank and forbidding; the other by a terrace of small houses, from the open windows of which comes the sound of many voices screaming, swearing, quarrelling; all talking at once. Every door is open, and at each stands a wan, weary-faced woman, meanly dressed, a shawl wrapped round her shoulders; they all look cold—all of them hungry. Here and there a group of two or three are gossiping, complaining vehemently of something that is a "shame"; or angrily describing the conduct of some man. They are the women "off the strength"—that is, who have married a soldier without permission. They don't get quarters or rations, but subsist on what their husband can spare out of his shilling a-day. One of them will ask you to step inside, "There are some

girls upstairs, and we're going to have a dance"; or again, "There's a sing-song in there; Jerry is going to give us a song; won't you look in?" You are glad to get out of Barrack Street and away from the amusements it offers: there is a Barrack Street close to every barrack in England, and it is to Barrack Street that the soldier will go if he can't get what he wants inside. Now, the canteen lends itself to provide amusement, if it is possible to find a suitable room adjoining but not actually in the canteen itself: the president is almost an autocrat, and can do what he likes, while the canteen fund can always find the money with which to do it.

Such an opportunity occurred when a regiment was in Aldershot at the time when the troops were quartered in huts, a large one being allotted to the canteen: adjoining it, separated by a partition, was a second hut of the same size. At one end the canteen president built a stage; arranged for some scenery and for the lights, everything being done in the regimental workshops: the body of the hut was then filled with benches for the audience. If any of the men attending wanted their beer, they had to go outside and enter the door of the canteen, close by, so that the regulations were observed.

Every week the stage was occupied by one or other of the strolling companies which are always to be found in Aldershot ready to give an entertainment

such as soldiers like—a short play, a selection of part-songs, clog-dancing, mesmerism. There was a little woman who gave a séance, at which she performed several feats by animal magnetism, which was very much the rage then, usually at the expense of the young soldier, much to his own mystification and the delight of his older comrades. In this manner the men who frequented the canteen got a good evening's entertainment for a nominal sum. Sometimes they brought their wives or friends from outside, so that with the men from other regiments the "house" was crowded. Whenever a man wanted a drink he went into the canteen for it, just as we ourselves do at a theatre. The consequence was that the soldiers were content to pass their evenings with the regiment instead of straying away to Barrack Street; probably to wind up the evening in the hands of the military police, followed next morning by appearing before their commanding officer on a charge of drunkenness.

It would be unfair indeed, in writing of this subject, to make no mention of the various institutions established and conducted by private workers for the elevation of Thomas Atkins; and of these none deserves our heartier recognition than the Soldiers' Homes under the direction of Miss Elise Sandes. When, some thirty years ago, Miss Sandes, following up a suggestion of some of the soldiers there them-

selves, started a club outside the barracks at Cork, she sowed a seed which has had a rich increase. The work begun then in a small recreation-room and coffee-room is now, as we learn from Miss Sandes' book,¹ carried on in no fewer than fifteen Homes in Ireland, as well as in one in England and six in India; while a few other Homes in England and Scotland are directed on the same lines. And of the excellence of the work done in these Homes there can be no doubt. Wherever they exist, the soldiers show their appreciation by their attendance. A large majority of the troops in Ireland are English and Scottish. These are allowed an annual furlough of a month or six weeks, and thus are always passing in great numbers through the Irish seaports. In view of this, the Homes in these towns are provided with beds, and it is a remarkable fact that 14,000 service men (for sailors and policemen, as well as soldiers, are received) slept in one of the Dublin Homes last year. How much these Homes, and the friendship and the refining and spiritual influence of the ladies who conduct them, mean to our soldiers—many of them fresh from cultivated households, others struggling to free their feet from vicious ways into which the too numerous temptations of a soldier's life have led them—is known to all our

officers who have had an opportunity of observing them at work, and has been acknowledged by Lord Roberts and others in high command. "They have been the turning-point of many a soldier's life," said the Duke of Connaught at the opening of the Limerick Home last May; and his Highness continued: "I am convinced that nothing has ever done more for his Majesty's army than what has been done by these Soldiers' Homes." But though the agencies for the elevation of Thomas Atkins have increased enormously since Miss Sandes began her club thirty years ago, they are still feeble for the task they have to accomplish. Miss Sandes' own work, for example, may still be said to have begun only; and it is to be hoped that the nation at large will cordially recognise the value of all such disinterested efforts, and enable them to be carried on and extended without financial anxiety. As the Duke of Connaught said when he opened a Soldiers' Home lately erected by her in the North of Ireland: "The number of ladies and civilians present prove how greatly the army is appreciated, and how earnestly the necessity of these Homes is recognised for our soldiers who have done good and noble work, plucky in the field and humane in dealing with their enemies; Homes for them of such enormous benefit in fostering kindly

¹ Enlisted; or, My Story. By Elise Sandes, Soldiers' Home, Cork.

feelings, and cultivating respectability among them. It is to their agency that we owe the improved tone, the good-fellowship and kindly feeling that exists throughout all ranks of the army."

As regards meals and the way they are served. A man's ration remains the same as it was fifty years ago: it was what the men we enlisted then were accustomed to get, either at home or, more often, picked up in the streets. A ration of $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. of good meat and 1 lb. of bread is enough for any man for breakfast and dinner; but the interval between dinner at one o'clock and breakfast next morning at eight o'clock is too long for the young men we now enlist, and a great deal too long for boys to be without food. Boys are a considerable addition to the strength of a regiment, and it is to them that we look for our best soldiers: there are trumpeters, buglers, drummers, musicians, and tailors,—all boys,—the percentage for the regiment being fixed.

The King's Regulations lay down that an "evening meal is invariably to be provided" in addition to breakfast and dinner; but it is difficult to make a third meal on what beef and bread is left from the two preceding meals, unless some addition is made to the ration. This has always been done by the men themselves, who have bought bread, vegetables, groceries, &c., according to taste, at the grocery bar. This expense for "messing," as

it is called, has always been a grievance with the men, who, rightly enough, insisted that when they enlisted they had been promised a clear shilling a-day. So in these days, when army matters hold the field, Authority discovered that to order "an evening meal invariably to be provided" is an absurdity, unless something to make a meal of comes in; and lately published an order giving the man his "messing" free, thus removing a palpable ground for complaint. But it is not altogether the quantity of the ration to which we allude; meat is well cooked, the cooks have been taught at the Army School of Cookery at Aldershot, and the dishes served up at the soldier's dinner are varied as much as possible, when we consider the many mouths there are to fill and the many tastes to satisfy.

Each company in the morning gives its name to the colour-sergeant, choosing whether dinners shall be "bake," "boil," or "stew"—a range in cookery the men would not expect at their own homes. If the company elects for "bake," the joints, previously weighed out for each mess of ten to twenty men, are brought across from the cook-house in the tins in which they have been baked; if for "boil" or "stew," in cleverly contrived tins, each holding the portion for a mess, and each one fitting into that below, so that the dinners for a company, portioned out for the separate messes, go over at the same time. Nothing could

be arranged better. It is when the men sit down to dinner that things might be a little more homelike. There is no tablecloth, except when it has been provided by the captain; salt is poured out on anything that comes to hand—an odd plate, a scrap of paper, or the table itself; mustard much the same. The meat is carved by the men, who, it may be taken, are not proficient in the art, their object being to chop it up into as many equal-sized junks as there are men to eat them. If a man wants a drink, the beer for as many as call for it is fetched by the corporal from the canteen in a large can, which is stood on the floor, each man dipping his share out of it with the basin he drinks his tea out of—a sloppy luxury; all perhaps trifles, but we should not like to sit down to our own dinner if such trifles occurred; and the working man, be he

“Soldier, sailor,
Tinker, tailor,”

has tastes a good deal in common with ourselves.

This fact seemed so obvious to the officer commanding a regiment that he set up a restaurant in barracks, at which men could get something to eat before they strolled out, or when they came back before going to bed. A barrack-room, which had a kitchen opening out of it, was used; it was neatly decorated with a coloured wash; the windows were hung with curtains, the walls with a few lithographs, and a bar such as

we see in the refreshment room at a railway-station provided. On it were tea- and coffee-urns; at the end a ham and a round of beef, the dishes resting on a white cloth; and conspicuous, on the wall behind, the day's “bill of fare.” Tables, to seat two, which could be put together so as to accommodate four or six, were ranged about the room, each laid with a clean cloth, mustard and salt in a neatly designed holder in the centre, and plenty of barrack chairs, which are really comfortable, to sit on. The bar opened at 4 P.M., when a plate of cold meat, with bread, butter, and pickles, could be had; at seven o'clock a hot supper of sausages, bacon, eggs, and bloaters could be ordered by a soldier, either at the time or earlier, both for himself alone or for a small party. A sergeant's wife was put in charge, and provided with two handy men to assist her in cooking or waiting.

To start an enterprise like this, the difficulty generally is to find the money; but it does not occur in a regiment, as the customers are ready found, and the profits of catering will very soon pay the original expense, no matter how much it is wished to keep them down. This room proved to be a great success, and was very popular, especially among the boys: both they and the men enjoyed the ability to order supper to be ready for them when they came back to barracks in the evening. The scheme has since been recog-

nised by authority, and a "Regimental Institute" is ordered to be "established in every unit," to provide the troops with much that has been advocated here. But matters done "by regulation" are seldom very elevating when it is a question of amusement. It is in the small decencies of home-life that regulation always fails.

The greatest obstacle in the way of attracting a better class of men to the army is their dread of the barrack-room at night, into which good and bad are crowded alike. The good manners of the soldier as we see him by day are not, in many cases, those of the same man when he is taking his rest in bed, where we do not see him. It is not meant that the generality of soldiers misbehave themselves at night, but it goes without saying that one or two low characters can make their sleeping-quarters objectionable to all decently brought-up lads. The fact is well known, and many remedies have been proposed, amongst them one that men should be allowed to sleep out in private houses set apart for them. Another, that each should sleep in his own cubicle, also impracticable; and again another, which was put into practice by the commanding officer of a distinguished English regiment. He divided his men into two categories, putting the better class to sleep in rooms by themselves; but the scheme failed, as it was sure to do, owing to the jealousy

which it entailed. The problem remains to be solved by the men themselves, when those of the class we hope to enlist are in so large a proportion as to insist upon as decent behaviour in the bedroom as on parade.

If in the afternoon we take a look through any barrack-gate, we shall probably see a squad of some dozen men in full dress, with knapsacks on their backs and belts recently pipe-clayed, marching round and round the square, watched by a corporal, his cane tucked under his arm, who continually gives the sharp word of command, "Right turn!" "Right turn!" when the squad turns as if by clock-work to continue its dreary march round the square. They are the "defaulters," men confined to barracks for the less serious offences, undergoing C.B., as it is called: they have to fall in for an hour's march, as we have seen, some four times a-day, they can't leave barracks or enter the canteen, and have to answer their name at every roll-call, with a loss of good-conduct pay if the punishment extends over a week. This is monotonous, as all punishments should be, but it is not degrading. In serious cases imprisonment can be given, which is degrading: the man's hair is cut as short as the jailor's scissors can cut it, he wears prison dress, is locked up in a cell by himself for most of the day, his food is little more than gruel, and his exercise consists of "shot-drill" round the prison-yard: the punishment is necessary in some cases, but

every soldier is liable to suffer it.

When flogging was permitted soldiers of good character were safeguarded from having to undergo it by a very wholesome rule. They were divided into two classes, as were offences, the first class of which comprised the lighter, the second the more serious crimes. Every man on joining was placed in the first class, but was reduced to the second if he committed some offence. But a man could not be flogged unless he was in this second class, and committed a crime under the second head; thus it was only the habitual offender who was liable to the lash. Now, if we substitute imprisonment for flogging, we shall remove the fear of the liability to a degrading punishment from the soldier's mind, reserving it for those who deserve it and to whom degradation has no terror—the men that an army wishes to get rid of.

So much for the social life of the soldier: let us take a glance at his professional life—the drilling of the man.

For our purpose here we will divide drill into two heads: "recruit-drill," which teaches a man how to march steadily in the simple formations which can be taught in the barrack square; and "drill in the open country," to be taught to him when he has mastered the first—the aim to abolish the monotonous "One! Two!" of the barrack-yard, which irritates; and to teach him, instead, independent ac-

tion outside, which will elevate him.

The second head can, again, be subdivided into "rifle-practice," absorbing two-thirds of the whole course, the remaining third to be spent in practical work across country. This has hitherto been practised when large bodies of troops could be brought together; and general officers in command have learnt very much; but autumn manœuvres have taught little to the junior officers or to the rank and file. If soldiers were taught to be soldiers on parades held in or across the country, whenever possible, instead of wasting their time and intelligence in what we have called "recruit-drill," we should encourage them to exert their intelligence, and give each one the opportunity to display individuality.

In so close a country as England this appears difficult to carry out; but the difficulty can be overcome. A regiment—let us say the South Kent Regiment—did so successfully, and what one regiment can do others can do also. Rifle-practice seems at first to be the principal difficulty. For firing practice there must be a range; but the most essential part of rifle-practice is to judge distance. A man is taught how to fire his rifle, and how to hit a target when the distance to it is known; but he fails to hit it when it is unknown. To remedy this, he is practised in judging the distance between himself and the target when it has not

been disclosed to him; but till now he has been taught to do this on the ranges he has fired at, or over ground which he has frequently moved across. The consequence is that he does not look at the object to be hit, or at the ground which intervenes, but compares the distance he is asked to guess with some other interval, near at hand, of which he knows the exact length. You constantly hear men doing so at the ranges, "It's the same as that tree is from the butts"; or, "I've walked it a dozen times: it's 500 yards to the corner of that hedge; he's about 100 farther on."

The South Kents got over the difficulty thus. The colonel decided to take the regiment for a march out. The day previous, accompanied by an officer who was interested in the matter, he rode along the road he intended to follow, and chose points along it which appeared suitable for halts, and from which a fair view of the country could be obtained. He called on the farmer whose land it was, and asked permission for some of the men to cross his fields, which was always granted when the object was explained. Next day the regiment marched out, preceded at sufficient distance by the officer who had visited the ground and by the men whom it was intended to throw out as "points": when he reached the spot agreed upon they were thrown out, and the distances to where they stood taken, so that on the arrival

of the regiment the men could see them standing about in the fields, calculate the distances, and give their answers as regulation requires. The regiment then moved off to the next halting-place, when the practice was repeated.

When a tactical exercise was to be taught, the men were divided into two parties, to represent opposing forces, and such elementary problems as the attack and defence of a position; holding a hedge or a wall; forcing or defending a river; the capabilities of ground for giving protection from sight or from fire, were explained and practised. The men marched back to barracks, after some hours spent on parade, with something more in their heads than they took out with them, in addition to good appetites for their dinners. Surely the hours spent thus appeal to intelligent men far more than those passed in wearying all the individuality out of them with the everlasting "One! Two!" of the barrack-square.

And the soldier, no matter how much routine has compelled him, will still remain a human being as we ourselves are. Under the scarlet tunic or the khaki coat it is not all padding; under all there is a brave heart.

We have but to read the letters he has written to his friends at home, during the late war, to understand the individuality of the writer of each—a personality wanting development. In 'The Epistles

of Atkins'¹ we catch an insight of the soldier's individual character: he may express himself, ungrammatically, in clumsy jokes or sarcasm, but the man is there; brave, careless of danger, humane, and unselfish; above all, with his heart in his English home—an Englishman before everything.

In the letters of our soldiers which the author has so admirably selected and connected together we obtain a living picture of his life in a campaign; in bivouac, on the march, amid the carnage of Spion Kop, parched with thirst on the veldt, wounded and in agony, yet no cry of complaint, no thought but for others—"Water! water! for the love of God!—no!—no more! there are still others ahead!" as the soldier, wounded at Colenso, groaned out. Who amongst us gentlemen at home could say more?

The same note is struck throughout a volume which records the inmost thoughts of men it was the custom once to call "common soldiers." If in such faint glimpses of a soldier's life as we catch in 'The Epistles of Atkins' we gather an insight into the man himself, is it not our duty to take such measures as we can to elevate him,—to utilise for good the material which we have within our reach?

By far the greatest inducement to a respectable lad to join the army is the certainty that he will find in it a home something like the home which

he leaves: that decides him, and he strolls off to a back street in which the recruiting office is situated—a dingy house in a dingy street. He is shown into a waiting-room bare of furniture, just a bench to sit upon and a look out over the chimney-pots. After a time he follows an orderly up the stairs, which are dark and steep; at the top is the office, as dingy as the waiting-room; some soldiers are writing at a desk, and a man in a shooting-coat, evidently an officer, puts some questions to him about himself, his parents, and if he is married: the answers are entered on a sheet of foolscap, which he signs; the officer hands him a Bible in a dirty cover, and telling him to repeat after him, administers the "oath of allegiance," speaking so quickly that the recruit finds it difficult to follow him. He has now been duly enlisted, and is probably marched off to barracks in charge of the orderly, who hands him over to the sergeant-major: the most momentous step in his life has been taken and he hopes that he has not made a mistake, for his life in the army has not commenced as he expected.

The method we have described was well enough when it was thought amongst decent men that it was a disgrace to be a soldier; when a man wishing to enlist slunk off to a street where he knew his friends would not follow him,

¹ The Epistles of Atkins. By J. Milne. Fisher & Unwin.

and got the thing over by stealth. Since the days we speak of Authority has learned that to induce a better class of men, and a younger, to enlist, the antique methods which appealed to "social failures" have no attractions for younger men, who can read and write, to whom the army offers something more than a last refuge. So improvements have crept in, with the hope that recruits who had hitherto slunk in by the back door might be cajoled into the belief that it is the front door of the army, because it has been opened wider.

Recruiting offices have been rebuilt; younger officers put in charge; while powers to enlist have been extended; the recruiting-sergeant with his streaming ribbons and his rendezvous in a taproom has been toned down; his proverbial shilling has disappeared altogether. Still, the respectable lad with the army at heart knows only what other lads have told him, that it is the recruiting-sergeant only who can open the door. So he strolls about till he finds him, to follow at his heels to the other end of the town to be attested, and back again to unearth a magistrate to swear him in: the functionary may be absent or engaged, when he has to wait about in the street, giving passers-by the idea that the poorly dressed lad by the side of so smart a sergeant must be in charge for something he has done wrong.

With all recent improve-

ments, the system, if we are to attract the men we want, must be raised in every way. Recruiting officers specially chosen for the work; men whom the lads longing to be soldiers will "believe in"; with that subtle attraction which makes them ready "to take his word for it." Dr Temple at Rugby was an example, as indeed is any successful schoolmaster. Men who have grown in years forget or have never appreciated how a few words, in time, from a superior are remembered by a lad who is just entering the world; how they are treasured, an influence for good through all after-life. An officer may have passed first out of the Staff College; be next on the list for a post; a born tactician, a model strategist, an unbending drill-sergeant; but a few sympathetic words of hope and encouragement are worth them all in a lad's mind.

Now that civilians no longer look askance at a soldier, the man should not have to get away to a back street to enlist. There should be a handsome building in a main street, its purpose written boldly on the front, "Recruiting Office for the Army." The steps leading up to it should be wide; the waiting-room neatly furnished, on the table books and papers containing information about a soldier's life, the walls hung with pictures of soldiers in many uniforms. Upstairs the recruiting officer, in uniform, will put the questions and explain their meaning, hand him

a decently bound Bible, and administer the oath without hurry. When he has signed the paper of questions, the officer will shake hands with him, saying, "I hope you will like being a soldier; mind that you are a good one!" and the recruit finds his way to the barracks. An officer commanding a regiment made a point of meeting every batch of recruits that came in at a quiet part of the barrack-square, out of hearing of the adjutant or sergeant-major, and of saying a few words to each, asking him about his parents, his home, and himself: it was a welcome to the new home, and the lads appreciated it. The sergeant-major when he receives a recruit does so with an official air; the boy feels that routine has begun, and his enthusiasm is chilled at

the very outset of his career. Routine is necessary, but might be relaxed in the matters to which we have alluded.

The recent overwhelming increase in the power of firearms demands a change in the constitution of an army and in the training of a soldier—a change not to be effected by the publication of a Red Book. Great works are often the outcome of minute efforts, just as the ant, a weak and insignificant insect, by its microscopic energy can impede the march of an army across the South African veldt. We hope that the small changes suggested above in the routine of a soldier's life may prove steps in the right direction towards the much greater change in the army which the last development in warfare demands.

NIGHT CHANT OF A NOMAD ASIATIC SHEPHERD.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

WHAT doest thou, O moon, there in the skies?
Tell me, thou silent moon, what doest thou?
As night falls, thou dost rise
And go upon thy way,
These lonely deserts ever in thy view,
Then sinkest down to rest.

Art thou not weary yet
Of traversing again, and yet again,
One everlasting round?
Art thou not sick, at best,
Or dost thou still delight,
In gazing on these valleys mountain-bound?
This shepherd's life of mine
Is very like to thine.
At break of day he rises, leads his flock
Across the plains, on, onward, ever on;
Cattle he sees, spring-heads, and grass, and then
At eve he lays him down to rest again:
No hope for anything beyond has he.
Tell me, O moon, of what avail can be
The shepherd's life to him, or how to thee
Thine own can aught avail?
Tell me whereto they tend,
My sojourn here, that soon must have an end,
And thy immortal course, that ne'er can fail?

Grown old, white-haired, and frail
In limb, half-clad, his shoulders bent
Beneath a heavy load,
O'er hill and dale he hies him on his road,
O'er cutting rocks, deep sands, through brake and brier,
Battered by wind and storm, now scorched with heat,
Now shrivell'd up by cold and stung by sleet;
For breath he pants, yet still he hurries on
Through torrent, marsh, and mire,
Stumbles, gets up, and, quickening his pace,

Stays not for food or rest ;
Tattered and torn, with bare and bleeding feet,
He struggles on,—and all to reach at last
The goal, for which that weary road was trod,
For which that heavy toil was undergone,
Into that vast abhorr'd abyss to fall
Headlong, and find therein
Oblivion of all !
Such, maiden moon, as this
The life of mortals is.

For trouble man is born,
And birth but the assurance is of death ;
The first things that he knows are grief and pain,
And even while yet he draws his earliest breath,
Mother and father strain
How to console their child for being born.
Then, as in years he grows,
They give him help, and, early both and late,
Study by word and deed
To put heart into him, and make amends
For what he must endure, as being man.
Nor for their offspring can
Parents do service to more gracious ends,—
But why have brought them into sunlight? Why
This life through lengthening days uphold,
That, as the years go by,
Perforce must for its being be consoled?
And why, if life be sad beyond relief,
Should we thus lengthen out its tale of grief?
And such, O thou inviolate moon, as this
The life of mortals is.
But mortal thou art not, and so
May'st be indifferent to my tale of woe.

And yet, thou lone, eternal pilgrim, thou,
That art so pensive, may'st, perchance,
Know what they mean, this life of ours on earth,
Our sufferings, our sorrows, and couldst tell,
This dying, what it means, and what this cold
Uncolouring of the countenance,
This passing from the earth, and all
Familiar things, and the companionship
Of those that hold us dear ;

And, of a surety, thou dost know full well
The Why of things, and canst perceive
What fruit is born of morning and of eve,
And of time's silent, everlasting flow.
Thou knowest surely, too, for whom the Spring
The treasure of its loving smiles unveils,
To whom the scorching sunbeams are a boon,
Whom Winter profits by its snows and ice:
Thousands of things thou know'st, and thousands canst divine,
That are from me, a simple shepherd, hid.

Full often, when I gaze on thee
Standing so still above these desert wastes,
Whose far circumference borders on the sky,
Or, as my flock moves with me, following on,
By slow and silent steps, along the heavens;
Or when I see on high the stars aflame,
Strange thoughts arise within me, and I say,
These myriad torches, why are they alight?
Unto what end that infinite of air,
Those infinite depths of azure sky serene?
What does this solitude so vast import,
And what am I?

Thus with myself I reason; questioning
Whereto this boundless glorious universe,
And living things innumerable there?
Then of the ceaseless toil I think, the mighty powers,
That move all things on earth, all things in heaven,
Revolving without pause unceasingly,
To come back evermore to whence they sprang.
Not in all this can I divine
Or use or profit; but most sure it is,
That thou, immortal maid, dost know it all.
As for myself, this do I know and feel,
That from these constant circlings to and fro,
And this so fragile entity of mine,
Whate'er perchance they may of woe or weal
To others bring,
To me life sadness is and suffering.

Oh, my dear flock, that resteth there so still,
How happy you, that, as I do believe,
Have no forebodings of your hapless doom!
How do I envy you!

Not only for that ye
From care art wellnigh free,
That heat, or hurt, or toilsome road,
Or even the wildest scare
By you so quickly are forgot;
But, rather, that you ne'er
Have felt the pressure of life's irksome load.
Laid on the grass to rest, beneath the shade,
Ye are at peace and utterly content.
For months and months such is thy state;
By 'noyance of no kind are ye perplex'd.
I sit me down beneath the welcome shade,
Upon the grass, and straight
My mind is cumbered by a leaden weight
Of dull despondency, and thoughts that sting
And smite as with a goad.
So, sitting there, still further off am I
From finding comfort or tranquillity;
And yet I lack for nought,
And know no reason why I should be sad.
What makes your happiness, or small or great,
I cannot tell, but ye are fortunate,
And I, my flock, have little joy the while;
Nor 'tis for only this I make my moan.

If ye could speak, my question would be this:
Tell me, why every animal, that lies
Couch'd in some pleasant spot, and takes its rest,
Should have a sense of bliss,
But, when I lay me down to rest, a sense
Of sadness and disgust takes hold of me.

Perchance, if I had wings,
Above the clouds to fly,
And one by one to number all the stars;
Or could like lightning dart from peak to peak,
I should be happier, my beloved flock,
And thou be happier, too, thou pale, white moon:
And yet my thoughts, mayhap, are far astray,
Of what the lot of other lives may be.
Mayhap, whate'er their form, whate'er their state,—
In kindly homestead or in savage lair,—
To everything that breathes its natal day
A day is of disaster and dismay.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

AN AGE OF BOOKS—THE USE AND ABUSE OF LIBRARIES—DUKE HUMPHREY
AND THE NEW LEARNING—ITALY AND OXFORD—SIR THOMAS BODLEY
—HIS CAREER—THE FOUNDATION OF HIS LIBRARY—ITS THREE-
HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY—GENEROUS BENEFACTORS—THE BRITISH
ASSOCIATION.

It is an age of books, and there is scarce a day without its Free Library. Fashion and municipal socialism have combined to place popular, unwieldy books of reference within the reach of all, and to provide universal facilities for the munching of cheap novels. So there is none who may not, if he will, browse upon printed matter; and though we are not sure that a mixed diet of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' and Mr Hall Caine is the best that can be devised for the human brain, let us make a pride of necessity, and boast cheerfully that not even in the age of the Ptolemies were there so many readers and so many books as to-day. Indeed, if literature and its consumers may be measured by bulk, our age is more deeply tinctured with letters than any since the beginning of time. But something else than ink and paper is needed for the vague quality called culture, and not even the champions of Free Libraries are wholly satisfied with their achievement. They are obliged to confess that the number of real students is small indeed; they complain bitterly that the vast majority of readers demand no more than the trumpery novel, which, as

an anodyne, is a formidable rival to the gin-palace. Yet how should it be otherwise? It is a fruitless task to thrust intelligence summarily upon an unwilling populace. A library should be something better than a hastily purchased agglomeration of books, and it is doubtful whether the gift of a building and the sudden imposition of an unwelcome rate are the wisest possible encouragement of learning.

The truth is, that reading is not of itself a good or useful action. It is with many merely another form of laziness. A statesman once delivered a wise address in favour of desultory reading; but before a rider can leap from horse to horse, he must acquire a firm seat in his saddle. In other words, no man can be a desultory reader if he do not thoroughly understand the use and abuse of books. And the worst of Free Libraries is that they place before all and sundry a mass of printed matter which the victims are unable to distinguish or appreciate. Facility can only be bought at a price, and the price we have paid and are paying for the general diffusion of knowledge is false learning and much bad literature. How could it be otherwise? If

our supply of butter be limited, it must be spread thinner and thinner as the bread increases. That Free Libraries have here and there served a wise purpose, that once in a while they have encouraged a lonely student, we would not for a moment deny. At the same time they have lowered the general standard, and they have given to the word library a meaning which in older and better days it had not. Watch one of these popular institutions in the grey twilight of a dull afternoon, and can you escape a just depression? There on every hand are tired boys and girls goggling their weary eyes at the false sentiment and tawdry pathos of the modern novel. Or eager loafers scan the latest odds in the newspaper, hoping that on the morrow their literary labours will find their reward. The air of the close room is as jaded as its occupants, and though a rare student may be hidden in a corner, the aspect is less of learning than of idleness.

But the Free Library especially falls below the high office which all libraries should perform, because it comes into existence ready made. Little forethought selects the books which line its shelves. They are bought, like soap or sugar, by the pound. They do not belong peculiarly to the building which contains them. You may find their fellows in all the institutions of the same kind which are scattered up and down England. They represent nothing save that vague body

of printed matter called "current literature," and those solid blocks known as "books of reference." The ideal library, on the other hand, reveals either a taste or a tradition. If it be the work of one man, it is or should be a picture of its maker's mind. Even its rejections are eloquent, since they proclaim a frank contempt or at least a lack of sympathy. If the library belong to a university, it displays the predilections of many scholars, and proves that the generations have been knit together by a chain of scholarly tradition. Thus it is a vast pleasure to turn aside from the noisy taverns of literature, known as Free Libraries, to the great library of Oxford, which this month is celebrating its tercentenary with a proper solemnity. For the Bodleian is a monument not only to Sir Thomas Bodley, who served it so well, but to the devotion which Oxford has for many centuries paid to humane letters. Here in a single building is symbolised the intellectual life of a great university, and the history of the Bodleian is in the best sense the history of Oxford.

There were brave men before Agamemnon, and Bodley was not the first who bestowed gifts of books upon Oxford. More than a century before, the good Duke Humphrey of Gloucester had brought back to his University the reborn learning of Italy. There is no pleasanter chapter in our history than that which sets forth the new interest which our scholars took in the literature of Greece and Rome. In those days books were rare,

and he who would study the ancient tongues was forced to seek both texts and professors in Padua or Bologna. Yet many were the Englishmen who set out from Oxford—some travelling with all the splendour which wealth could give, some tramping across Europe, ill-fed and ill-clad, in the guise of beggar students. But none of them returned empty-handed. The rich, like Duke Humphrey or Tiptoft, purchased manuscripts, and encouraged the needy scholars. The poor came back with light trunks and heavy heads, ready to teach their fellows the lessons which Italy had taught them. Nor was learning the stern routine which it has since become. Latin and Greek were undiscovered continents, and he who sought to penetrate their fastnesses knew well the meaning of romance. And it was to Oxford that the best of the treasures were brought, and they could not have found a better home. Between the years 1439 and 1446, Duke Humphrey presented the University with six hundred precious manuscripts, and when the room at St Mary's seemed too small to hold his gifts, he so generously aided in the building of the New School—now the Library—that he is justly styled its Founder in the Bedell's book. Thus the University grew rich in manuscripts and learning; thus it encouraged the study of Greek with a liberality which even Erasmus applauded; and at last its poor students could find at home the scholarship for which they thirsted, with-

out a hazardous journey to Italy. But the triumph of Oxford was short-lived. The Reformation came, a check upon learning. In 1550 Edward VI.'s commissioners "visited" Oxford with unhappy zeal. They destroyed the library, they destroyed or dispersed the precious books, or they sold them "to tailors for their measures, to bookbinders for covers," until in 1556 a syndicate of venerable scholars was appointed to sell the shelves and stalls, now useless in the empty library. But in the Reformers' despite, the spirit of Duke Humphrey was still alive, and four years after the spoliation of the library, Thomas Bodley, who was destined to rebuild and embellish it, entered as a student at Magdalen Hall.

This remarkable man, whose name will live with the name of Oxford, was born at Exeter in 1544. He was descended, in his own phrase, "both by father and mother of worshipful parentage"; but in those days "worshipful parentage" was but a poor security, and his father, "being noted and known to be an enemy of Popery," fled in Queen Mary's time to Germany and thence to Geneva. There it was that Thomas Bodley learned his first lessons in scholarship, and it says much for the precocity of his age and mind that though he was but twelve years old he attended the lectures of the most learned professors. "I was, through my father's cost and care," says he, "sufficiently instructed to become an auditor of Chevalerius in Hebrew, of Ber-

oaldus in Greek, of Calvin and Beza indivinity;" and, as though this were not enough, Robertus Constantius, that made the Greek Lexicon, read Homer to him. He was therefore a finished scholar at an age when a modern boy would still be conning his accidence at a preparatory school, and it is not surprising that taste and talent alike persuaded him to a studious life. At Mary's death his father returned with his family to England, and Thomas Bodley was sent to the University of Oxford, "recommended to the teaching and tuition of Dr Humphrey." There, having taken his degree and being admitted fellow of Merton, he undertook the reading of a Greek lecture, at first requiring no payment, but afterwards accepting from the fellowship the modest stipend of four marks a-year. In due course he became Proctor and Public Orator, and "bestowed his time in the study of sundry faculties." Yet, despite his love of learning, the unbroken calm of Oxford began to irk him. Like the beggar students of the previous age, he too desired to taste the fruits of travel, and in 1676, after sixteen years spent in the University, he resolved to go beyond the seas. But, unlike the beggar students, he travelled with all the comforts which wealth could give, and though he doubtless purchased such books and manuscripts as came in his way, affairs engrossed his interest more gravely than learning. For it was now his purpose to assume the public service of the State, and by

acquiring foreign languages to fit himself for such embassies as the Queen might intrust him withal. In 1585, then, he was employed to draw the King of Denmark and sundry German Princes into an alliance with Henry of Navarre; and this being well accomplished, he was sent on a mission of extraordinary secrecy to King Henry the Third of France. So great was his discretion that when, many years afterwards, he drew the brief outlines of his life, he thought it fit "to conceal the effect of that message." Suffice it to say that he travelled without a single servant, and no documents save letters writ in the Queen's own hand. In such employ he remained for many years, until, returning to London, he became tiresomely involved in the intrigues of the Court, and not caring to balance the favour of the Earl of Essex against Lord Burleigh's protection, he determined to find some other field for the exercise of his intelligence. "I fell to discourse and debate in my mind,"—thus he tells the story in his own involved prose,—"that although I might find it fittest for me to keep out of the throng of Court contentions, and address my thoughts and deeds to such ends altogether, as I myself could best affect; yet withal I was to think that my duty towards God, the expectation of the world, my natural inclination, and very morality did require, that I should not wholly hide those little abilities that I had, but that in some measure, in one kind or other, I should do the true part of a profitable

member of the State." An admirable resolution truly, and we cannot look back upon Thomas Bodley's work without solid satisfaction that the animosities of Burleigh and Essex drove him from the service of the Court.

Having resolved, then, to devote himself to some useful pursuit, Bodley had but to select "the most proper of all ways to the wood," and so he concluded to set up his "staff at the Library Door at Oxford." Nor could he have made a better choice. The place had for many years been ruined and laid waste. The shelves had long ago been sold by the Vice-Chancellor and his venerable colleagues. The books which once adorned them had been basely sold and dispersed, whereby the cause of learning had grievously suffered. Accordingly Bodley wrote to the Vice-Chancellor that since "there hath bin heretofore a publike library in Oxford, which, you know, is apparant by the roome itself remayning, and by your statute records, I will take the charge and cost upon me to reduce it again to its former use." Seldom in our history has a benefaction been so wisely chosen and so liberally carried out. Many generations of scholars have profited by Bodley's splendid resolution to set up his staff at the Library Door, and it is not surprising that his generosity has been an incentive to others. At the out-

set, however, there were many difficulties to overcome. "Bodley is looked for daily at Oxford," wrote Sir Dudley Carleton in April 1599; "his library costs him much more than he expected, because the timber-works of the house were rotten and had to be new made."¹ But Bodley was not discouraged; the magnificent roof was finished and painted, and within two years the shelves of the new library were ready to receive the gifts of the munificent. Nor did the munificent tarry. "You having built an ark to save learning from deluge," wrote Bacon some years after, "deserve propriety in any new instrument or engine whereby learning should be improved or advanced." And instruments new and old speedily packed the shelves. Bodley's own gifts were rich and various, for not only did he present the many volumes which he had collected himself, but he gave Bill, the London bookseller, a roving commission to gather what he could upon the Continent. Nor was he ever unmindful of what might profit the Library. As no detail was too small to escape him, so he formed vast schemes for the easy acquisition of books. On the one hand he set up a bell, which should warn the too eager scholars of the closing doors; on the other, he made an agreement with the Stationers' Company, by which all new books published by its mem-

¹ For this and many other documents and facts we are indebted to Mr Macray's valuable 'Annals of the Bodleian Library.'

bers should be presented to the Library. From this agreement grew the Copyright Acts, which have done so much to enrich our public libraries, and the whole world owes an incalculable debt to Bodley's foresight. Thus the Library grew under the eye of its founder, whose own munificence was a noble example to such men as Lord Buckhurst, the Earl of Essex, and Mr William Gent. Now, we find Lord Mountjoy presenting Bodley with £100. Now, the Dean and Chapter of Exeter give eighty-one Latin manuscripts to their fellow-townsmen. And in every case it was Bodley himself who attracted the generosity of the donors. Indeed, he so profoundly impressed James I., when that monarch visited Oxford in 1605, that he received not only a knighthood, but the offer of whatever books he chose to select from all the royal palaces. So Sir Thomas Bodley devoted both life and wealth to the increase of his library, and when in 1613 death overtook him, he died in the full assurance that the house of his foundation was firmly established. And his liberality did not end with life. To the grim displeasure of his kinsfolk he left the most of his property to the Bodleian, which unhappily did not enjoy the full bequest. For part of it was embezzled by a fraudulent trustee, and part, being lent to Charles I. in the time of his great necessity, was never repaid. One wishes that his heirs had had a nicer sense of honour, even if one admire the

simple faith of the University, which until 1782 still dreamed of repayment.

But while Bodley's trustee embezzled what he could, Bodley's friends and kinsmen stormed and raved. Little did they understand the single-mindedness of the man, who cared not what happened to others, so long as his own monument was properly builded. "He was so carried away (if a man may say so)," wrote one John Chamberlain, "with vanity and vain-glory of his library, that he forgot all other respects and duties almost of conscience, friendship, or good nature; and all he had was too little for that work. To say the truth, I never did rely much on his conscience; but I thought he had been more real and ingenuous." It is impossible to sympathise deeply with the disappointed greed of John Chamberlain. Throughout his life Bodley had placed public duty before private generosity, and who shall say that he was not justified? Even if his friends were foiled of their legacies, unnumbered scholars have profited by his skill and munificence. It is easy enough for a rich man to give his money away. It is only the truly liberal man who will give his leisure as well as his gold. Now, Bodley was not content to hand over a bag of gold. He must needs see to the building himself, and when once the library was ready to receive its treasures, he would leave the collection of the books to none other than himself. So that his library still mirrors his

mind, and exemplifies his energy: for which reason (among others) it is of far greater value than the best of its rivals.

From his career, then, we may deduce the character of Thomas Bodley. He was, as we have said, single-minded before all things. That upon which he had determined he carried out with tireless energy. Withal, he was masterful and independent. He was not content to be a benefactor—he must watch over his benefaction while life lasted. Though he appointed Thomas James his librarian, he did not forget that he himself was the founder, and he never relinquished a founder's rights. He drew up the laws which should control the library, and if these laws were broken, he took care that he should be the man to break them. Celibacy, said he, should be essential to a librarian, and when Thomas James demanded permission to marry, he flouted "the unseasonable and unreasonable motions." Yet marry James did, and with Bodley's permission, who re-stated his law, which "hereafter he purposed should become inviolable." For the rest, the founder was a man of affairs as well as a scholar, who displayed his delicate tact not only in the many embassies intrusted to him, but in the skill wherewith he was able to collect books for his University. His eloquence appears to have been irresistible, and those works which he did not present himself, he wheedled from the collections of the great. And, best of all, he set an example which his successors

could not but follow. The Bodleian has thus been marvelously increased by private gifts. In 1634 that elegant pedant, Sir Kenelm Digby, presented to the University no less than 238 manuscripts. Their interest, as one would expect from the inventor of the Sympathetic Powder, is mainly scientific, and even to this day they remain separate and unique. Then came Selden, who left to the Bodleian some 8000 volumes, and there was scarce a year without its added treasures, until in 1834 Francis Douce bequeathed his priceless collection. It is said that he was persuaded to this act of liberality by the courtesy wherewith Dr Bandinel received him when he visited Oxford with Isaac D'Israeli, and, if this be so, it should be a lesson to all librarians, who have not always been famous for the suavity of their manners.

These are but a few of the benefactors who have enriched the Bodleian, which through all the chances of time and change remains the creation of Thomas Bodley. In the magnificent room, which is still the glory of Oxford, the founder looks down upon the readers who profit by his generosity. His high forehead and narrow face, typical of his age and class, still remind us what manner of man he was; and even if he treated his own kinsfolk scurvily, he yet deserves all the honour which his University and Europe can pay him. Nor will the reverence shortly to be paid him fall below its occasion. There is no university in Europe which will

not send its delegate to do honour to the memory of Thomas Bodley; and at Oxford these delegates may see what taste and tradition may accomplish in the collection and housing of books. To give such an institution as the Bodleian the same name as is conferred upon pert buildings of pitch-pine which spring up in a night is a misuse of language, and some other word than library should be found for our modern homes of general utility. "The bookes that are contained within this Lybrarie," wrote Anthony Nixon in 1605, "are verie rare, strange, and scarce, seldome or not at all to be heard of or seene in any place but there." The books which are contained in our free libraries are seldom strange or scarce, and the modern librarian is less interested in the collection of books than in the mechanical contrivances whereby he registers the absence of a favourite volume. Doubtless each institution serves its purpose after its own fashion; but we would gladly give a wilderness of free libraries for one such august foundation as this month celebrates its jubilee.

It is characteristic of Thomas Bodley, who guarded his library with untiring jealousy, that he would permit no book nor manuscript to be taken from the building. Kenelm Digby, on the other hand, preferred a freer system. Bishop Laud, in announcing Digby's gift, declared that "hee will not subject these manuscripts to the strictnes of Sir Thomas Bodley's statutes, but will have

libertie given for any man of woerth, that wilbee at the paines and charge to print any of these bookes, to have them oute of the Librarye upon good caution given; but to that purpose and noe other." The question, thus posed, is still debated. Shall our great libraries lend their treasures or shall they not? Selden, it is said, did not behave so handsomely to the Bodleian as he had intended, because the loan of a book was once refused him save under a bond of £1000. But whether this be true or not, he tied up the books of his own bequest so strictly that not one was allowed to leave the library under any conditions whatever. Now, when the delegates of all countries meet at Oxford much will be said, no doubt, concerning England's lack of hospitality. For England, alone of the nations, declines to lend either book or manuscript. It is true that Cambridge knows how to be open-handed, and that Oxford admits some rare exceptions. But the British Museum is obdurate, and it is only natural that the scholars of Europe, whose countries make no scruple of sending their precious possessions overseas, adopt a tone of complaint. The ground of their complaint is perfectly reasonable, and yet the question cannot be answered by a mere plea of expediency. That scholarship suffers by our selfish policy is evident. It is not always that a scholar can spend weeks in London or Oxford to consult a manuscript; and even if he can spare the time, the close air of

a public library is not most congenial to study. The advantages of a free interchange of books and manuscripts, then, are evident. But these advantages must not blind us to the very serious risk that a free interchange of books entails. Books have many enemies, who are best kept at bay from within the secure fortress of a library. In the first place, they may be destroyed or defaced in transit; in the next, they may be soiled or pilfered of their pages by the borrower; or, worse still, they may be mislaid and lost for a generation, if not for ever. All these accidents have happened in the past, and what has been will be. The borrower of books has less conscience even than the borrower of money. A sanguine temper too often persuades him that what is in his house is his own property. The manuscript of the Paston Letters was lost for many years from the King's Library, and Mr Heber owned a manuscript of Castilian poetry which had once belonged to the Escorial. But it is idle to multiply examples of carelessness or dishonesty. A yet more dangerous foe is the vain scholar, who would change or deface a manuscript for his own aggrandisement. The infamous Courier blotted a fragment of Longus, which he had imperfectly copied, that all the world should know this fragment from his copy, and truly he has won an immortality, if it be not precisely that which he sought. Of course similar accidents as this may happen in the most carefully guarded library. But

the risk is infinitely greater in a private study, and should it not be our duty to minimise the risk? Such manuscripts as are commonly borrowed are unique, for were they not unique they would not be asked to travel. Whatever bond the borrower may give, he cannot protect the treasure against harm, and if it be destroyed all the money in the world cannot replace it. The case for an exclusive policy was excellently put by Thomas Barlow, Bodley's librarian, in 1659. "The library," said he, "is a magazine which the pious Founder hath fix'd in a publick place for a publick use; and though his charity to private persons is such that he will hinder none (who is justly qualify'd and worthy) to come to it, yet his charity to the publick is such that he would not have it ambulatory, to goe to any private person. And sure 'tis more rational that Mahomet should go to the mountaine, than that the mountaine should come to Mahomet."

Surely 'tis more rational. But this epigram does not close the discussion. The generosity of foreign countries has complicated what might have been a simple question, and even now diplomatic representations are being made to the proper quarter. If our scholars accept the generosity of France and Germany, have we a right to treat their scholars with discourtesy? Having received favours, can we do less than return them? We fear not, and before long we shall see

our precious manuscripts going on tour across the Channel. But at least we may ask that due precautions shall be taken that all loans be made not to private scholars but to other libraries. The responsibility will then lie upon institutions grave enough to accept it, and we shall be protected against the egoism of Courier as against the general carelessness of learned men.

Autumn is the season of congresses, and while we look forward to Bodley's celebration we look back to the meeting of the British Association. Curiously enough, our men of science assembled this year at Belfast, where wellnigh thirty years ago John Tyndall delivered his famous address. And nothing can be greater than the contrast between then and now. In 1874 Science seemed brilliant, speculative, and absorbing. A world jaded with what it erroneously believed a worn-out dogma, was determined to regenerate itself by a theory. There was no difficulty (we were told) that Science could not resolve, no mystery of life and death which Science could not penetrate. It seemed, indeed, as though chemists and biologists were to rule our destinies; our universities, forgetting the claims of literature, backed the popular study with a lavish hand; and after much controversy Science became almost as scandalous as a trial at the Old Bailey. This result was due, no doubt, to the persuasive eloquence of men such as Tyndall and Huxley, who were apostles

of a new creed as well as patient observers of natural phenomena. Thus under their auspices Science claimed, at our universities and elsewhere, far more than her share of attention, and her professors were so confident of themselves and their studies that they believed their triumph permanent and irreversible. But of late years the pendulum has swung back, and not only does the British Association admit the discussion of such trivial subjects as Education and Anthropology, but it takes a far humbler tone than of yore. No longer does it pretend to solve all the spiritual difficulties which beset the human mind. On the contrary, its tone is as sternly materialistic as the tone commonly assumed by a Chamber of Commerce. Its president demands not salvation but efficiency, and a better system of education was the theme of many an eloquent speaker. With Professor Perry's attack upon our English schools we cannot agree. All that a boy is capable of receiving is a general education; and no professor of science can complain so long as a boy is delivered over to his teaching with no false science to unlearn. But these systematic details need not engage us here. What seems most remarkable is the change which the popular opinion has undergone during the last quarter of a century. Speculation no longer attracts us, and if the "Symposia" which distinguished the early numbers of the 'Nineteenth Century' were published to-day, they would find

no readers. Nowadays nothing attracts that is not positive and materialistic. The competition of modern life is so keen that the most of men would rather learn how to get on than discover the purpose of existence. Doubtless the change is for the better. Prosperity, we are sure, is more useful than eloquence, and when we compare Tyndall's address with Professor Dewar's, we recognise that Science has properly shifted its ground from theory to practice. Once it aspired to teach us what to think; now it prefers to teach us what to do. In other words, it has confessed its limitations, and reduced its tyranny. Nevertheless, what it has gained in practical utility it has lost in entertainment. There is nothing in Professor Dewar's address equal in discursive interest to Tyndall's summary of human knowledge, wherein he quoted Democritus

and Lucretius, Goethe and "the Stagirite." No living man of science could assert that "it is the function of the teacher of humanity to call forth a resonance of the human heart; and he is no true teacher who does not possess a life within himself competent to call forth responsive life in others." Our teachers of to-day would laugh such generalities to scorn, yet to the lay mind these generalities are far more amusing than the frigid discussion of low temperature initiated by Professor Dewar, and in the name of curiosity we regret the brave old days in which magicians discoursed mysteriously of protoplasm and chlorophyll. After all, we may learn the duty of efficiency from the daily paper, and a meeting of the British Association is dull indeed which brings us no keener excitement than much sound economics and a new theory of totemism.

THE END OF THE TETHER.¹

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

X.

THE knowledge was too disturbing, really. There was "something wrong" with a vengeance, and the moral certitude of it was at first simply frightful to contemplate. Sterne had been looking aft in a mood so idle, that for once he was thinking no harm of any one. His captain on the bridge presented himself naturally to his sight. How insignificant, how casual was the thought that had started the train of discovery—like an accidental spark that suffices to ignite the charge of a tremendous mine!

Caught under by the breeze, the awnings of the foredeck bellied upwards and collapsed slowly, and above their heavy flapping the grey stuff of Captain Whalley's roomy coat fluttered incessantly around his arms and trunk. He faced the wind in full light, with his great silvery beard blown forcibly against his chest; the eyebrows overhung heavily the shadows whence his glance appeared to be staring ahead piercingly. Sterne could just detect the twin gleam of the whites shifting under the shaggy arches of the brow. At short range these eyes, for all the man's affable manner, seemed to look you

through and through. Sterne never could defend himself from that feeling when he had occasion to speak with his captain. He did not like it. What a big heavy man he appeared up there, with that little shrimp of a Serang in close attendance—as was usual in this extraordinary steamer! Confounded absurd custom that. He resented it. Surely the old fellow could have looked after his ship without that loafing native at his elbow. Sterne wriggled his shoulders with disgust. What was it? Indolence or what?

That old skipper must have been growing lazy for years. They all grew lazy out East here (Sterne was very conscious of his own unimpaired activity); they got slack all over. But he towered very erect on the bridge; and quite low by his side, as you see a small child looking over the edge of a table, the battered soft hat and the brown face of the Serang peeped over the white canvas screen of the rail.

No doubt the Malay was standing back, nearer to the wheel; but the great disparity of size in close association amused Sterne like the observation of a bizarre fact in nature. There were as queer

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fish out of the sea as any in it.

He saw Captain Whalley turn his head quickly to speak to his Serang; the wind whipped the whole white mass of the beard sideways. He would be directing the chap to look at the compass for him, or what not. Of course. Too much trouble to step over and see for himself. Sterne's scorn for that bodily indolence which overtakes white men in the East increased on reflection. Some of them would be utterly lost if they hadn't all these natives at their beck and call; they grew perfectly shameless about it too. He was not of that sort, thank God! It wasn't in him to make himself dependent for his work on any shrivelled up little Malay like that. As if one could ever trust a silly native for anything in the world! But that fine old man thought differently, it seems. There they were together, never far apart; a pair of them, recalling to the mind an old whale attended by a little pilot fish.

The fancifulness of the comparison made him smile. A whale with an inseparable pilot-fish! That's what the old man looked like; for it could not be said he looked like a shark, though Mr Massy had called him that very name. But Mr Massy did not mind what he said in his savage fits. Sterne smiled to himself—and gradually the ideas evoked by the sound, by the imagined shape of the word pilot-fish; the ideas of aid, of guidance needed and

received, came uppermost in his mind: the word pilot awakened the idea of trust, of dependence, the idea of the welcome, clear-eyed help brought to the seaman groping for the land in the dark: groping blindly in fogs: feeling their way in the thick weather of the gales that filling the air with a salt mist blown up from the sea contract the range of sight on all sides to a shrunken horizon that seems within reach of the hand.

A pilot sees better than a stranger, because his local knowledge, like a sharper vision, completes the shapes of things hurriedly glimpsed; penetrates the veils of mist spread over the land by the storms of the sea; defines with certitude the outlines of a coast lying under the pall fog, the forms of landmarks half buried in a starless night as in a shallow grave. He recognises because he already knows. It is not to his far-reaching eye but to his more extensive knowledge that the pilot looks for certitude; for this certitude of the ship's position on which may depend a man's good fame and the peace of his conscience, the justification of the trust deposited in his hands, with his own life too, which is seldom wholly his to throw away, and the humble lives of others rooted in distant affections, perhaps, and made as weighty as the lives of kings by the burden of the awaiting mystery. The pilot's knowledge brings relief and certitude to the commander of a ship; the Serang, however, in his fanciful suggestion of a pilot-fish attend-

ing a whale, could not in any way be credited with a superior knowledge. Why should he have it? These two men had come on that run together—the white and the brown—on the same day: and of course a white man would learn more in a week than the best native would in a month. He was made to stick to the skipper as though he were of some use—as the pilot-fish, they say, is to the whale. But how—it was very marked—how? A pilot-fish—a pilot—a . . . But if not superior knowledge then . . .

Sterne's discovery was made. It was repugnant to his imagination, shocking to his ideas of honesty, shocking to his conception of mankind. This enormity affected one's outlook on what was possible in this world: it was as if for instance the sun had turned blue, throwing a new and sinister light on men and nature. Really in the first moment he had felt sickish, as though he had got a blow below the belt: for a second the very colour of the sea seemed changed—appeared queer to his wandering eye; and he had a passing, unsteady sensation in all his limbs as though the earth had started turning the other way.

A very natural incredulity succeeding this sense of upheaval brought a measure of relief. He had gasped; it was over. But afterwards during all that day sudden paroxysms of wonder would come over him in the midst of his occupations. He would stop and shake his head. The revolt of

his incredulity had passed away almost as quick as the first emotion of discovery, and for the next twenty-four hours he had no sleep. That would never do. At meal times (he took the foot of the table set up for the white men on the bridge) he could not help losing himself in a fascinated contemplation of Captain Whalley opposite. He watched the deliberate upward movements of the arm; the old man put his food to his lips as though he never expected to find any taste in his daily bread, as though he did not know anything about it. He fed himself like a somnambulist. "It's an awful sight," thought Sterne; and he watched the long period of mournful, silent immobility, with a big brown hand lying loosely closed by the side of the plate, till he noticed the two engineers to the right and left looking at him in astonishment. He would close his mouth in a hurry then, and lowering his eyes, wink rapidly at his plate. It was awful to see the old chap sitting there; it was even awful to think that with three words he could blow him up sky high. All he had to do was to raise his voice and pronounce a single short sentence, and yet that simple act seemed as impossible to attempt as moving the sun out of its place in the sky. The old chap could eat in his terrific mechanical way; but Sterne, from mental excitement, could not—not that evening, at any rate.

He had had ample time since to get accustomed to the strain of the meal-hours. He would

never have believed it. But then use is everything; only the very potency of his success prevented anything resembling elation. He felt like a man who, in his legitimate search for a loaded gun to help him on his way through the world, chances to come upon a torpedo—upon a live torpedo with a shattering charge in its head and a pressure of many atmospheres in its tail. It is the sort of weapon to make its possessor careworn and nervous. He had no mind to be blown up himself; and he could not get rid of the notion that the explosion was bound to damage him too in some way.

This vague apprehension had restrained him at first. He was able now to eat and sleep with that fearful weapon by his side, with the conviction of its power always in his mind. It had not been arrived at by any reflective process; but once the idea had entered his head, the conviction had followed overwhelmingly in a multitude of observed little facts to which before he had given only a languid attention. The abrupt and faltering intonations of the deep voice; the taciturnity put on like an armour; the deliberate, as if guarded, movements; the long immobilities, as if the man he watched had been afraid to disturb the very air: every familiar gesture, every word uttered in his hearing, every sigh overheard, had acquired a special significance, a confirmatory import.

Every day that passed over the *Sofala* appeared to Sterne simply crammed full with proofs

—with incontrovertible proofs. At night, when off duty, he would steal out of his cabin in pyjamas (for more proofs) and stand a full hour, perhaps, on his bare feet below the bridge, as absolutely motionless as the awning stanchion in its deck socket near by. On the stretches of easy navigation it is not usual for a coasting captain to remain on deck all the time of his watch. The Serang keeps it for him as a matter of custom; in open water, on a straight course, he is usually trusted to look after the ship by himself. But this old man seemed incapable of remaining quietly down below. No doubt he could not sleep. And no wonder. This was also a proof. Suddenly in the silence of the ship panting upon the still, dark sea, Sterne would hear a low voice above him exclaiming nervously—

“Serang!”

“Tuan!”

“You are watching the compass well?”

“Yes, I am watching, Tuan.”

“The ship is making her course?”

“She is, Tuan. Very straight.”

“It is well; and remember, Serang, that the order is that you are to mind the helmsmen and keep a lookout with care, the same as if I were not on deck.”

Then, when the Serang had made his answer, the low tones on the bridge would cease, and everything round Sterne seemed to become more still and more profoundly silent. Slightly chilled and with his back aching a little from long immo-

bility, he would steal away to his room on the port side of the deck. He had long since parted with the last vestige of incredulity; of the original emotions, set into a tumult by the discovery, some trace of the first awe alone remained. Not the awe of the man himself—he could blow him up sky high with six words—rather it was an awestruck indignation at the reckless perversity of avarice (what else could it be?), at the mad and sombre resolution that for the sake of a few dollars more seemed to set at nought the common rule of conscience and pretended to struggle against the very decree of Providence.

You could not find another man like this one in the whole round world—thank God. There was something devilishly dauntless in the character of such a deception which made you pause.

Other considerations occurring to his prudence had kept him tongue-tied from day to day. It seemed to him now that it would yet have been easier to speak out in the first hour of discovery. He almost regretted not having made a row at once. But then the very monstrosity of the disclosure . . . Why! He could hardly face it himself, let alone pointing it out to somebody else. Moreover, with a desperado of that sort one never knew. The object was not to get him out (that was as well as done already), but to step into his place. Bizarre as the thought seemed he might have shown fight. A fellow up to

working such a fraud would have enough cheek for anything; a fellow that, as it were, stood up against God Almighty Himself. He was a horrid marvel—that's what he was: he was perfectly capable of brazening out the affair scandalously till he got him (Sterne) kicked out of the ship and everlastingly damaged his prospects in this part of the East. Yet if you want to get on something must be risked. At times Sterne thought he had been unduly timid of taking action in the past; and what was worse, it had come to this, that in the present he did not seem to know what action to take.

Massy's savage moroseness was too disconcerting. It was an incalculable factor of the situation. You could not tell what there was behind that insulting ferocity. How could one trust such a temper; it did not put Sterne in bodily fear for himself, but it frightened him exceedingly as to his prospects.

Though of course inclined to credit himself with exceptional powers of observation, he had by now lived too long with his discovery. He had gone on looking at nothing else, till at last one day it occurred to him that the thing was so obvious that no one could miss seeing it. There were four white men in all on board the *Sofala*. Jack, the second engineer, was too dull to notice anything that took place out of his engine-room. Remained Massy—the owner—the interested person—nearly going mad with

worry. Sterne had heard and seen more than enough on board to know what ailed him; but his exasperation seemed to make him deaf to cautious overtures. If he had only known it, there was the very thing he wanted. But how could you bargain with a man of that sort? It was like going into a tiger's den with a piece of raw meat in your hand. He was as likely as not to rend you for your pains. In fact, he was always threatening to do that very thing; and the urgency of the case, combined with the impossibility of handling it with safety, made Sterne in his watches below toss and mutter open-eyed in his bunk, for hours, as though he had been burning with fever.

Occurrences like the crossing of the bar just now were extremely alarming to his prospects. He did not want to be left behind by some swift catastrophe. Massy being on the bridge, the old man had to brace himself up, and make a show, he supposed. But it was getting very bad with him, very bad indeed, now. Even Massy had been emboldened to find fault this time; Sterne, listening at the foot of the ladder, had heard the other's whimpering and artless denunciations. Luckily the beast was very stupid and could not see the why of all this. However, small blame to him; it took a clever man to hit upon the cause. Nevertheless, it was high time to do something. The old man's game could not be kept up for many days more.

"I may yet lose my life at this fooling — let alone my chance," Sterne mumbled angrily to himself, after the stooping back of the chief engineer had disappeared round the corner of the skylight. Yes, no doubt — he thought; but to blurt out his knowledge would not advance his prospects. On the contrary, it would blast them utterly as likely as not. He dreaded another failure. He had a vague consciousness of not being much liked by his fellows in this part of the world; inexplicably enough, for he had done nothing to them. Envy, he supposed. People were always down on a clever chap who made no bones about his determination to get on. To do your duty and count on the gratitude of that brute Massy would be sheer folly. He was a bad lot. Unmanly! A vicious man! Bad! Bad! A brute! A brute without a spark of anything human about him; without so much as simple curiosity even, or else surely he would have responded in some way to all these hints he had been given. . . . Such insensibility was almost mysterious. Massy's state of exasperation seemed to Sterne to have made him stupid beyond the ordinary silliness of ship-owners.

Sterne, meditating on the embarrassments of that stupidity, forgot himself completely. His stony, unwinking stare was fixed on the planks of the deck.

The slight quiver agitating the whole fabric of the ship was more perceptible in the silent

river, shaded and still like a forest path. The *Sofala*, gliding with an even motion, had passed beyond the coast-belt of mud and mangroves. The shores rose higher, in firm sloping banks, and the forest of big trees came down to the brink. Where the earth had been crumbled by the floods it showed a steep brown cut, denuding a mass of roots intertwined as if wrestling underground; and in the air, the interlaced boughs, bound and loaded with creepers, carried on the struggle for life, mingled their foliage in one solid wall of leaves, with here and there the shape of an enormous dark pillar soaring, or a ragged opening, as if torn by the flight of a cannon-ball, disclosing the impenetrable gloom within, the secular inviolable shade of the virgin forest. The thump of the engines reverberated regularly like the strokes of a metronome beating the measure of the vast silence, the shadow of the western wall had fallen across the river, and the smoke pouring backwards from the funnel eddied down behind the ship, spread a thin dusky veil over the sombre water, which, checked by the flood-tide, seemed to lie stagnant in the whole straight length of the reaches.

Sterne's body, as if rooted on the spot, trembled slightly from top to toe with the internal vibration of the ship; from under his feet came sometimes a sudden clang of iron, the noisy burst of a shout below; to the right the leaves of the tree-tops caught the rays of the

low sun, and seemed to shine with a golden green light of their own shimmering around the highest boughs which stood out black against a smooth blue sky that seemed to droop over the bed of the river like the roof of a tent. The passengers for Batu Beru, kneeling on the planks, were engaged in rolling their bedding of mats busily; they tied up bundles, they snapped the locks of wooden chests. A pockmarked pedlar of small wares threw his head back to drain into his throat the last drops out of an earthenware bottle before putting it away in a roll of blankets. Knots of travelling traders standing about the deck conversed in low tones; the followers of a small Rajah from down the coast, broad-faced simple young fellows in white drawers and round white cotton caps with their coloured sarongs twisted across their bronze shoulders, squatted on their hams on the hatch, chewing betel with bright red mouths as if they had been tasting blood. Their spears, lying piled up together within the circle of their bare toes, resembled a casual bundle of dry bamboos; a thin, livid Chinaman, with a bulky package wrapped up in leaves already thrust under his arm, gazed ahead eagerly; a wandering Kling rubbed his teeth with a bit of wood, pouring over the side a bright stream of water out of his lips; the fat Rajah dozed in a shabby deck-chair,—and at the turn of every bend the two walls of leaves reappeared running

parallel along the banks, with their impenetrable solidity fading at the top to a vaporous mistiness of countless slender twigs growing free, of young delicate branches shooting from the topmost limbs of hoary trunks, of feathery heads of climbers like delicate silver sprays standing up without a quiver. There was not a sign of a clearing anywhere; not a trace of human habitation, except when in one place, on the bare end of a low point under an isolated group of slender tree-ferns, the jagged, tangled remnants of an old hut on piles appeared with that peculiar aspect of ruined bamboo walls that look as if smashed with a club. Farther on, half hidden under the drooping bushes, a canoe containing a man and a woman together with a dozen green cocoanuts in a heap, rocked helplessly after the *Sofala* had passed, like a navigating contrivance of venturesome insects, of travelling ants; while two glassy folds of water streaming away from each bow of the steamer across the whole width of the river ran with her up

stream smoothly, fretting their outer ends into a brown whispering tumble of froth against the miry foot of each bank.

"I must," thought Sterne, "bring that brute Massy to his bearings. It's getting too absurd in the end. Here's the old man up there buried in his chair—he may just as well be in his grave for all the use he'll ever be in the world—and the Serang's in charge. Because that's what he is. In charge. In the place that's mine by rights. I must bring that savage brute to his bearings. I'll do it at once, too . . ."

When the mate made an abrupt start, a little brown half-naked boy, with large black eyes, and the string of a written charm round his neck, became panic-struck at once. He dropped the banana he had been munching, and ran to the knee of a grave dark Arab in flowing robes, sitting like a Biblical figure, incongruously, on a yellow tin trunk corded with a rope of twisted rattan. The father, unmoved, put out his hand to pat the little shaven poll protectingly.

XI.

Sterne crossed the deck upon the track of the chief engineer. Jack, the second, retreating backwards down the engine-room ladder, and still wiping his hands, treated him to an incomprehensible grin of white teeth out of his grimy hard face; Massy was nowhere to be seen. He must have gone straight into his berth. Sterne

scratched at the door softly, then, putting his lips to the rose of the ventilator, said—

"I must speak to you, Mr Massy. Just give me a minute or two."

"I am busy. Go away from my door."

"But pray, Mr Massy . . ."

"You go away. D'you hear? Take yourself off altogether—

to the other end of the ship—quite away . . .” The voice inside dropped low. “To the devil.”

Sterne paused: then very quietly—

“It’s rather pressing. When do you think you will be at liberty, sir?”

The answer to this was an exasperated “Never”; and at once Sterne, with a very firm expression of face, turned the handle.

Mr Massy’s state room—a narrow, one-berth cabin—smelt strongly of soap, and presented to view a swept, dusted, unadorned neatness, not so much bare as barren, not so much severe as starved and lacking in humanity, like the ward of a public hospital, or rather (owing to the small size) like the clean retreat of a desperately poor but exemplary person. Not a single photograph frame ornamented the bulkheads; not a single article of clothing, not as much as a spare cap, hung from the brass hooks. All the inside was painted in one plain tint of pale blue; two big sea-chests in sailcloth covers and with iron padlocks fitted exactly in the space under the bunk. One glance was enough to embrace all the strip of scrubbed planks within the four unconcealed corners. The absence of the usual settee was striking; the teak-wood top of the washing-stand seemed hermetically closed, and so was the lid of the writing-desk, which protruded from the partition at the foot of the bed-place, containing a mattress as thin as a pancake under a threadbare

blanket with a faded red stripe, and a folded mosquito net against the nights spent in harbour. There was not a scrap of paper anywhere in sight, no boots on the floor, no litter of any sort, not a speck of dust anywhere; no traces of pipe ash even, which, in a heavy smoker, was morally revolting, like a manifestation of extreme hypocrisy; and the bottom of the old wooden arm-chair (the only seat there), polished with much use, shone as if its shabbiness had been waxed. The screen of leaves on the bank, passing as if unrolled endlessly in the round opening of the port, sent a wavering network of light and shade into the place.

Sterne, holding the door open with one hand, had thrust in his head and shoulders. At this amazing intrusion Massy, who was doing absolutely nothing, jumped up speechless.

“Don’t call names,” murmured Sterne hurriedly. “I won’t be called names. I think of nothing but your good, Mr Massy.”

A pause as of extreme astonishment followed. They both seemed to have lost their tongues. Then the mate went on with a discreet glibness.

“You simply couldn’t conceive what’s going on on board your ship. It wouldn’t enter your head for a moment. You are too good—too—too upright, Mr Massy, to suspect anybody of such a . . . It’s enough to make your hair stand on end.”

He watched for the effect: Massy seemed dazed, uncomprehending. He only passed

the palm of his hand on the coal black wisps plastered across the top of his head. In a tone suddenly changed to confidential audacity Sterne hastened on.

"Remember that there's only six weeks left to run . . ." The other was looking at him stonily . . . "so anyhow you shall require a captain for the ship before long."

Then only, as if that suggestion had scarified his flesh in the manner of red-hot iron, Massy gave a start and seemed ready to shriek. He contained himself by a great effort.

"Require—a—captain," he repeated with scathing slowness. "Who requires a captain? You dare to tell me that I need any of you humbugging sailors to run my ship. You and your likes have been fattening on me for years. It would have hurt me less to throw my money overboard. Pam—pe—red us—e—less fffrauds. The old ship knows as much as the best of you." He snapped his teeth audibly and growled through them. "The silly law requires a captain."

Sterne had taken heart of grace meantime.

"And the silly insurance people too, as well," he said lightly. "But never mind that. What I want to ask is: Why shouldn't *I* do, sir? I don't say but you could take a steamer about the world as well as any of us sailors. I don't pretend to tell *you* that it is a very great trick . . ." He emitted a short, hollow guffaw, familiarly . . . "I didn't make the law—but there it is; and I am an active young fellow; I

quite hold with your ideas; I know your ways by this time, Mr Massy. I wouldn't try to give myself airs like that—that—er—lazy specimen of an old man up there."

He put a marked emphasis on the last sentence, to lead Massy away from the track in case . . . but he did not doubt of now holding his success. The chief engineer seemed nonplussed, like a slow man invited to catch hold of a whirligig of some sort.

"What you want, sir, is a chap with no nonsense about him, who would be content to be your sailing-master. Quite right, too. Well, I am fit for the work as much as that Serang. Because that's what it amounts to. Do you know, sir, that a dam' Malay like a monkey is in charge of your ship—and no one else. Just listen to his feet pit-patting above us on the bridge—real officer in charge. He's taking her up the river while the great man is wallowing in the chair—perhaps asleep; and if he is, that would not make it much worse either—take my word for it."

He tried to thrust himself farther in. Massy, with lowered forehead, one hand grasping the back of the arm-chair, did not budge.

"You think, sir, that the man has got you tight in his agreement . . ." Massy raised a heavy snarling face at this . . . "Well, sir, one can't help hearing of it on board. It's no secret. And it has been the talk on shore for years; fellows have been making bets about it. No, sir! It's *you* who have

got him at your mercy. You will say that you can't dismiss him for indolence. Difficult to prove in court, and so on. Why, yes. But if you say the word, sir, I can tell you something about his indolence that will give you the clear right to fire him out on the spot and put me in charge for the rest of this very trip—yes, sir, before we leave Batu Beru—and make him pay a dollar a day for his keep till we get back, if you like. Now, what do you think of that? Come, sir. Say the word. It's really well worth your while, and I am quite ready to take your bare word. A definite statement from you would be as good as a bond."

His eyes began to shine. He insisted. A simple statement,—and he thought to himself that he would manage somehow to stick in his berth as long as it suited him. He would make himself indispensable; the ship had a bad name in her port; it would be easy to scare the fellows off. Massy would have to keep him.

"A definite statement from me would be enough," Massy repeated slowly.

"Yes, sir. It would." Sterne stuck out his chin cheerily and blinked at close quarters with that unconscious impudence which had the power to enrage Massy beyond anything.

The engineer spoke very distinctly.

"Listen well to me, then, Mr Sterne: I wouldn't—d'ye hear?—I wouldn't promise you the value of two pence for anything *you* can tell me."

He struck Sterne's arm away with a smart blow, and catching hold of the handle pulled the door to. The terrific slam darkened the cabin instantaneously to his eyes as if after the flash of an explosion. At once he dropped into the chair. "Oh no! You don't!" he whispered faintly.

The ship had in that place to shave the bank so close that the gigantic wall of leaves came gliding like a shutter against the port; the darkness of the primeval forest seemed to flow into that bare cabin with the odour of rotting leaves of sodden soil—the strong muddy smell of the living earth steaming uncovered after the passing of a deluge. The bushes swished loudly alongside; above there was a series of crackling sounds, with a sharp rain of small broken branches falling on the bridge; a creeper with a great rustle snapped on the head of a boat davit, and a long, luxuriant green twig actually whipped in and out of the open port, leaving behind a few torn leaves that remained suddenly at rest on Mr Massy's blanket. Then, the ship sheering out in the stream, the light began to return but did not augment beyond a subdued clearness: for the sun was very low already, and the river, wending its sinuous course through a multitude of secular trees as if at the bottom of a precipitous gorge, had been already invaded by a deepening gloom—the swift precursor of the night.

"Oh no, you don't!" mur-

mured the engineer again. His lips trembled almost imperceptibly; his hands too, a little: and to calm himself he opened the writing-desk, spread out a sheet of thin greyish paper covered with a mass of printed figures and began to scan them attentively for the twentieth time this trip at least.

With his elbows propped, his head between his hands, he seemed to lose himself in the study of an abstruse problem in mathematics. It was the list of the winning numbers from the last drawing of the great lottery which had been the one inspiring fact of so many years of his existence. The conception of a life deprived of that periodical sheet of paper had slipped away from him entirely, as another man, according to his nature, would not have been able to conceive a world without fresh air, without activity, or without affection. A great pile of flimsy sheets had been growing for years in his desk, while the *Sofala*, driven by the faithful Jack, wore out her boilers in tramping up and down the Straits, from cape to cape, from river to river, from bay to bay; accumulating by that hard labour of an overworked, starved ship the blackened mass of these documents. Massy kept them under lock and key like a treasure. There was in them, as in the experience of life, the fascination of hope, the excitement of a half-penetrated mystery, the longing of a half-satisfied desire.

For days together, on a trip, he would shut himself up in his

berth with them: the thump of the toiling engines pulsed in his ear; and he would weary his brain poring over the rows of disconnected figures, bewildering by their senseless sequence, resembling the hazards of destiny itself. He nourished a conviction that there must be some logic lurking somewhere in the results of chance. He thought he had seen its very form. His head swam; his limbs ached; he puffed at his pipe mechanically; a contemplative stupor would soothe the fretfulness of his temper, like the passive bodily quietude procured by a drug, while the intellect remains tensely on the stretch. Nine, nine, ought, four, two. He made a note. The next winning number of the great prize was forty-seven thousand and five. These numbers of course would have to be avoided in the future when writing to Manilla for the tickets. He mumbled, pencil in hand . . . "and five. Hm . . . hm." He wetted his finger: the papers rustled. Ha! But what's this! Three years ago, in the September drawing, it was number nine, ought, four, two that took the first prize. Most remarkable. There was a hint there of a definite rule? He was afraid of missing some recondite principle in the overwhelming wealth of his material. What could it be? and for half an hour he would remain dead still, bent low over the desk, without twitching a muscle. At his back the whole berth would be thick with a heavy body of smoke, as if a bomb had burst in there, unnoticed, unheard.

At last he would lock up the desk with the decision of unshaken confidence, jump up and go out. He would walk swiftly back and forth on that part of the foredeck which was kept clear of the lumber and of the bodies of the native passengers. They were a great nuisance, but they were also a source of profit that could not be disdained. He needed every penny of profit the *Sofala* could make. Little enough it was, in all conscience! The incertitude of chance gave him no concern, since he had somehow arrived at the conviction that, in the course of years, every number was bound to have his winning turn. It was simply a matter of time and of taking as many tickets as he could afford for every drawing. He generally took rather more; all the earnings of the ship went that way, and also the wages he allowed himself as chief engineer. It was the wages he paid to others that he begrudged with a reasoned and at the same time a passionate regret. He scowled at the lascars with their deck brooms, at the quarter-masters rubbing the brass rails with greasy rags; he was eager to shake his fist and roar abuse in bad Malay at the poor carpenter—a timid, sickly, opium-fuddled Chinaman, in loose blue drawers for all costume, who invariably dropped his tools and fled below, with streaming tail and shaking all over, before the fury of that “devil.” But it was when he raised up his eyes to the bridge where one of these sailor frauds was always planted by law in charge of his

ship that he felt almost dizzy with rage. He abominated them all; it was an old feud, from the time he first went to sea, an unlicked cub with a great opinion of himself, in the engine room. The slights that had been put upon him. The persecutions he had suffered at the hands of skippers—of absolute nobodies in a steamship after all. And now that he had risen to be a shipowner they were still a plague to him: he had absolutely to pay away precious money to the conceited useless loafers:—As if a fully qualified engineer—who was the owner as well—were not fit to be trusted with the whole charge of a ship. Well! he made it pretty warm for them; but it was a poor consolation. He had come in time to hate the ship too for the repairs she required, for the coal-bills he had to pay, for the poor beggarly freights she earned. He would clench his hand as he walked and hit the rail a sudden blow, viciously, as though she could be made to feel pain. And yet he could not do without her; he needed her; he must hang on to her tooth and nail to keep his head above water till the expected flood of fortune came sweeping up and landed him safely on the high shore of his ambition.

It was now to do nothing, nothing whatever, and have plenty of money to do it on. He had tasted of power, the highest form of it his limited experience was aware of—the power of shipowning. What a deception! Vanity of vanities! He wondered at his folly. He

had thrown away the substance for the shadow. Of the gratification of wealth he did not know enough to excite his imagination with any visions of luxury. How could he—the child of a drunken boiler-maker—going straight from the workshop into the engine-room of a north country collier! But the notion of the absolute idleness of wealth he could very well conceive. He revelled in it, to forget his present troubles; he imagined himself walking about the streets of Hull (he knew their gutters well as a boy) with his pockets full of sovereigns. He would buy himself a house; his married sisters, their husbands, his old workshop chums, would render him infinite homage. There would be nothing to think of. His word would be law. He had been out of work for a long time before he won his prize, and he remembered how Carlo Mariani (commonly known as Paunchy Charley), the Maltese hotel-keeper at the slummy end of Denham Street, had cringed joyfully before him in the evening, when the news had come. Poor Charley, though he made his living by ministering to various abject vices, gave credit for their food to many a piece of white wreckage. He was naively overjoyed at the idea of his old bills being paid, and he reckoned confidently on a spell of festivities in the cavernous grog-shop downstairs. Massy remembered the curious, respectful looks of the “trashy” white men in the place. His heart had swelled within him. Massy had left Charley’s infamous den directly

he had realised the possibilities open to him, and with his nose in the air. Afterwards the memory of these adulations was a great sadness.

This was the true power of money,—and no trouble with it, nor any thinking required either. He thought with difficulty and felt vividly; to his blunt brain the problems offered by any ordered scheme of life seemed in their cruel toughness to have been put in his way by the obvious malevolence of men. As a shipowner every one had conspired to make him a nobody. How could he have been such a fool as to purchase that accursed ship. He had been abominably swindled; there was no end to this swindling; and as the difficulties of his improvident ambition gathered thicker round him, he really came to hate everybody he had ever come in contact with. A temper naturally irritable and an amazing sensitiveness to the claims of his own personality had ended by making of life for him a sort of inferno—a place where his lost soul had been given up to the torment of savage brooding.

But he had never hated any one so much as that old man who had turned up one evening to save him from an utter disaster,—from the conspiracy of the wretched sailors. He seemed to have fallen on board from the sky. His footsteps echoed on the empty steamer, and the strange deep-toned voice on deck repeating interrogatively the words, “Mr Massy, Mr Massy there?” had been startling like a wonder.

And coming up from the depths of the cold engine-room, where he had been pottering dismally with a candle amongst the enormous shadows, thrown on all sides by the skeleton limbs of machinery, Massy had been struck dumb by astonishment in the presence of that imposing old man with a beard like a silver plate, towering in the dusk rendered lurid by the expiring flames of sunset.

"Want to see me on business? What business? I am doing no business. Can't you see that this ship is laid up?" Massy had turned at bay before the pursuing irony of his disaster. Afterwards he could not believe his ears. What was that old fellow getting at? Things don't happen that way. It was a dream. He would presently wake up and find the man vanished like a shape of mist. The gravity, the dignity, the firm and courteous tone of that athletic old stranger impressed Massy. He was almost afraid. But it was no dream. Five hundred pounds are no dream. At once he became suspicious. What did it mean? Of course it was an offer to catch hold of for dear life. But what could there be behind?"

Before they had parted, after appointing a meeting in a solicitor's office early on the morrow, Massy was asking himself, What is his motive? He spent the night in hammering out the clauses of the agreement—a unique instrument of its sort whose tenor got bruited abroad somehow and became the talk and wonder of the port.

Massy's object had been to

secure for himself as many ways as possible of getting rid of his partner without being called upon at once to pay back his share. Captain Whalley's efforts were directed to making the money secure. Was it not Ivy's money—a part of her fortune whose only other asset was the time-defying body of her old father? Sure of his forbearance in the strength of his love for her, he accepted, with stately serenity, Massy's stupidly cunning paragraphs against his incompetence, his dishonesty, his drunkenness, for the sake of other stringent stipulations. At the end of three years he was at liberty to withdraw from the partnership, taking his money with him. Provision was made for forming a fund to pay him off. But if he left the *Sofala* before the term, from whatever cause (barring death), Massy was to have a whole year for paying. "Illness?" the lawyer had suggested: a young man fresh from Europe and not overburdened with business, who was rather amused. Massy began to whine unctuously, "How could he be expected? . . ."

"Let that go," Captain Whalley had said with a superb confidence in his body. "Acts of God," he added. In the midst of life we are in death, but he trusted his Maker with a still greater fearlessness—his Maker who knew his thoughts, his human affections, and his motives. His Creator knew what use he was making of his health—how much he wanted it . . . "I trust my first illness will be my last. I've never

been ill that I can remember," he had remarked. "Let it go."

But at this early stage he had already awakened Massy's hostility by refusing to make it six hundred instead of five. "I cannot do that," was all he had said, simply, but with so much decision that Massy desisted at once from pressing the point but had thought to himself, "Can't! Old curmudgeon. *Won't!* He must have lots of money, but he would like to get hold of a soft berth and the sixth part of my profits for nothing if he only could."

And during these years Massy's dislike grew under the restraint of something resembling fear. The simplicity of that man appeared dangerous. Of late he had changed, however, had appeared less formidable and with a lessened vigour of life, as though he had received a secret wound. But still he remained incomprehensible in his simplicity, fearlessness, and rectitude. And when Massy learned that he meant to leave him at the end of the time, to leave him confronted with the problem of the boilers, his dislike blazed up secretly into hate.

It had made him so clear-eyed that for a long time now Mr Sterne could have told him nothing he did not know. He had much ado in trying to terrorise that mean sneak into silence; he wanted to deal alone with the situation; and—incredible as it might have appeared to Mr Sterne—he had not yet given up the desire and the hope of inducing that hated

old man to stay. Why! there was nothing else to do, unless he were to abandon his chances of fortune. But now, suddenly, since the crossing of the bar at Batu Beru things seemed to be coming rapidly to a point. It disquieted him so much that the study of the winning numbers failed to soothe his agitation: and the twilight in the cabin deepened, very sombre.

He put the list away, muttering once more, "Oh no, my boy, you don't. Not if I know it." He did not mean the blinking, eavesdropping humbug to force his action. He took his head again into his hands; his immobility confined in the darkness of this shut-up little place seemed to make him a thing apart infinitely removed from the stir and the sounds of the deck.

He heard them: the passengers were beginning to jabber excitedly; somebody dragged a heavy box past his door. He heard Captain Whalley's voice above—

"Stations, Mr Sterne." And the answer from somewhere on deck forward—

"Ay, ay, sir."

"We shall moor head up stream this time; the ebb has made."

"Head up stream, sir."

"You will see to it, Mr Sterne."

The answer was covered by the autocratic clang of the engine-room gong. The propeller went on beating slowly: one, two, three; one, two, three—with pauses as if hesitating on the turn. The gong clanged time after time, and the water

churned this way and that by the blades was making a great noisy commotion alongside. Mr Massy did not move. A shore-light on the other bank, a quarter of a mile across the river, drifted, no bigger than a tiny star, passing slowly athwart the circle of the port. Voices from Mr Van Wyk's jetty answered the hails from the ship; ropes were thrown and missed and thrown again; the swaying flame of a torch carried in a large sampan coming to fetch away in state the Rajah from down the coast cast a sudden ruddy glare into his cabin, over his very person. Mr Massy did not move. After a few last ponderous turns the engines stopped, and the prolonged clanging of the gong signified that the captain had done with them. A great number of boats and canoes of all sizes boarded the off-side of the *Sofala*. Then after a time the tumult of splashing, of cries, of shuffling feet, of packages dropped with a thump, the noise of the native passengers going away, subsided slowly. On the shore, a voice, cultivated, slightly authoritative, spoke very close alongside—

"Brought any mail for me this time?"

"Yes, Mr Van Wyk." This was from Sterne, answering over the rail in a tone of respectful cordiality. "Shall I bring it up to you?"

But the voice asked again—

"Where's the captain?"

"Still on the bridge, I believe. He hasn't left his chair. Shall I . . ."

The voice interrupted negligently.

"I will come on board."

"Mr Van Wyk," Sterne suddenly broke out with an eager effort, "will you do me the favour . . ."

The mate walked away quickly towards the gangway. A silence fell. Mr Massy in the dark did not move.

He did not move even when he heard slow shuffling footsteps pass his cabin lazily. He contented himself to bellow out through the closed door—

"You—Jack!"

The footsteps came back without haste; the door-handle rattled, and the second engineer appeared in the opening, shadowy in the sheen of the skylight at his back, with his face apparently as black as the rest of his figure.

"We have been very long coming up this time," Mr Massy growled, without changing his attitude.

"What do you expect with half the boiler tubes plugged up for leaks." The second defended himself loquaciously.

"None of your lip," said Massy.

"None of your rotten boilers—I say," retorted his faithful subordinate without animation, huskily. "Go down there and carry a head of steam on them yourself—if you dare. I don't."

"You aren't worth your salt then," Massy said. The other made a faint noise which resembled a laugh but might have been a snarl.

"Better go slow than stop the ship altogether," he ad-

monished his admired superior. Mr Massy moved at last. He turned in his chair, and grinding his teeth—

"Dam' you and the ship! I wish she were at the bottom of the sea. Then you would have to starve."

The trusty second engineer closed the door gently.

Massy listened. Instead of passing on to the bathroom where he should have gone to clean himself, the second entered his cabin, which was next door. Mr Massy jumped up and waited. Suddenly he heard the lock snap in there. He rushed out and gave a violent kick to the door.

"I believe you are locking yourself up to get drunk," he shouted.

A muffled answer came after a while.

"My own time."

"If you take to boozing on the trip I'll fire you out," Massy cried.

An obstinate silence followed that threat. Massy moved away perplexed. On the bank two figures appeared, approaching the gangway. He

heard a voice tinged with contempt—

"I would rather doubt your word. But I shall certainly speak to him of this."

The other voice, Sterne's, said with a sort of regretful formality—

"Thanks. That's all I want. I must do my duty."

Mr Massy was surprised. A short, dapper figure leaped lightly on the deck and nearly bounded into him where he stood beyond the circle of light from the gangway lamp. When it had passed towards the bridge, after exchanging a hurried "Good evening," Massy said surlily to Sterne who followed with slow steps—

"What is it you're making up to Mr Van Wyk for, now?"

"Far from it, Mr Massy. I am not good enough for Mr Van Wyk. Neither are you, sir, in his opinion, I am afraid. Captain Whalley is, it seems. He's gone to ask him to dine up at the house this evening."

Then he murmured to himself darkly—

"I hope he will like it."

(To be continued.)

BRITANNIA'S SEAL.

[IN the auburn hair and hazel eyes of Shakespeare behold the symbol and seal of Great Britain, where the early Celt and later Norman contend for mastery—a noble composite of great races and loving compromise of long centuries.]

BLEND^{ED} by Nature's cunning hand
Two races waiting Time's command
In Shakespeare's picture still survive;
Where Celt and Norman fondly strive,—
A composite divinely fair
Of hazel eyes and auburn hair.

With heart as pure as mountain rill,
And soul attuned to skylark trill;
With eyes where Love's flotilla lies,
And tresses born of sunny skies,
Sweet Mary Arden holds in fee
Far more than Norman heraldry.

John Shakespeare strays by Avon stream,
In Arden's woodland comes to dream;
Fair-haired, blue-eyed, with open face,
Of Cymric blood and warlike race:
With heart aglow he speaks her name,—
Her kiss the seal of Britain's fame.

'Twas hers to give the poet's art,
'Twas his to give the fervid heart;
From her those lustrous orbs of light,
From him that templed dome of might;—
In auburn hair and hazel eyes
Behold the centuries' compromise.

WALLACE BRUCE.

THE TREASURY AND ART—IN SCOTLAND.

KNOWLEDGE is more usually ascribed to a German than wit. One, however, with more of the latter than the former quality has said, "The English love Art, but Art does not love the English." The phrase gained currency, and his countrymen were for long convinced that in painting as in music Britain was far behind the land of Mozart and Beethoven. Music is not our concern, but it is interesting to note that a race which had a crowd of art-loving sovereigns to whom it owes its Dresden Gallery, its Munich "Glyptothek," to name but these, failed to produce a single painter of the first rank during the years when England was leading the way in landscape by the art of Gainsborough and Constable.

Art galleries and collections have many good purposes, but the instance of Germany in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is sufficient to prove that they do not necessarily beget masterpieces. While the rulers of Saxony and Bavaria were collecting the works of ancient sculptors and old Masters, the Fatherland was barren of painters and modellers of high accomplishment. For many years after the collections were formed and capable of giving inspiration and guidance, Germany could point to nothing greater than a Rauch, while France in the same period has her galaxy of great names from Watteau and Boucher to Millet and Corot, to

Rousseau, Diaz, and Daubigny. France had her galleries no doubt, so had Italy; but a blight had overtaken the land of Raphael and Titian. In England art was at its highest point. The North had succeeded to the heritage of the South,—but there were two exceptions: Germany was cut off from the succession, Spain had not lost her birthright. The land of Velasquez has, since the days of that master, never been without its torchbearers. Sometimes the light was faint, but Goya early, and Fortuny later, in the last century are witnesses enough to prove that the painters of to-day can claim an uninterrupted tradition, however various its interpretations have been. With France in the zenith of its achievement in paint, with England boasting Reynolds, Constable, and Gainsborough, and Scotland Raeburn, the decadence of painting is a theory that will not bear stating. Galleries and collections may fail to inspire work of any importance, but they are essential to the man of talent, and, given the man of genius, even he will be saved innumerable mistakes by a knowledge of the work of the men who have gone before. Take the case of a Scottish painter, Sir David Wilkie—a man of undeniable genius. He saw practically no pictures till he had acquired fame. Then he discovered that he did not know how to paint. It was too late;

but, as Mr Henley has said, "being a Scot, he had but to learn the truth to risk his all upon its capture." Wilkie's unfinished picture in the Scottish National Gallery is as pathetic and as striking a proof as you could well wish of the utility of art galleries. Had Wilkie seen the best work twenty years earlier than he did, Scotland would probably have boasted the parentage of another artist worthy a place beside Raeburn. Raeburn, it must be remembered, went to Rome before he was thirty, Wilkie to Spain after he was fifty. From Raphael, Titian, and Michael Angelo Raeburn learned what he could do: from Velasquez Wilkie learned, alas! what he might have done. Or take the case of John Phillip. A boy of seventeen, he voyaged from Aberdeen to London as a stowaway, and for a brief three days studied the achievements of the ancients in the National Gallery and the efforts of the moderns in the Royal Academy. He returned to Scotland inspired by the first and encouraged by the latter. *Anche io sono pittore* might have been his exultant cry. Not, however, till he went to Spain at the age of thirty-four did he find himself. Then he learned something of the possibilities of his chosen medium, and became the great colourist we know.

Wilkie is perhaps the most interesting figure in the history of Scottish art, and at this moment, when there seems to be a chance that a new impetus is to be given to art-teaching in his native land, it is not in-

appropriate to remember that Wilkie's only academic training was given first by the School of the Board of Manufactures in Edinburgh, and thereafter by the School of the Royal Academy in London. Both institutions failed to lead him to what he ultimately judged to be the better way. The futility of all academies and the barrenness of all the schools of art are themes on which it is well to leave the great "unhung" to descant. They have no lack of theories, and though they may be gravelled in argument, are never wanting in assertions.

Those of us who are not painters or sculptors can assume a more dispassionate, if less informed, pose, and to us it must appear that the essential opportunities which even genius requires are good training and good models. From Wilkie's day to our own Scotland has been imperfectly supplied with both.

The custody of art in Scotland has for long been given to a body which bears the inappropriate name of the Board of Manufactures. Its history is not without interest. The Commissioners who drew up the Articles of Union in 1706 discovered that if a uniform system of customs and excise were to prevail in the two kingdoms, a new burden would be laid upon the people of Scotland. The fifteenth article explains that this additional taxation would be "applicable towards payment of the debts of England contracted before the Union." A similar balance in favour of Scotland was anticipated from the increased

duty on Scottish salt, which would be necessary to make the duty on this commodity equal in both countries. It was calculated that after the Union every £1000 of increased revenue from Scottish customs would provide £792 towards payment of the debts of England; of every £1000 of excise, £625 would go to the same purpose. £43,000 a-year, in brief, would, it was calculated, be provided by Scotland in payment of the national debt of England. It is interesting to recall the fact, that though England was rich and Scotland poor, the balance of direct financial benefit would, after the Union, have been in favour of England, had measures not been taken to provide compensation to Scotland. These measures were barely sufficient to attain the purpose. The national debts of Scotland were trifling,—a sum of £398,085, 10s. was sufficient not only to provide for their discharge, but also to buy up "the capital stock of the African and Indian Company of Scotland." It was even anticipated that this sum, after these two payments had been made, would provide a surplus. The only other charge upon the contributions from the Imperial Exchequer, including this surplus, was that "what consideration shall be found necessary to be had for any losses which private persons may sustain by reducing the coin of Scotland to the standard and value of the coin of England may be made good." Article xv. goes on to provide that "afterwards the same [i.e., the balance of the 'equivalent']

shall be wholly applied towards promoting the fisheries and such other manufactories and improvements in Scotland as may most conduce to the general good of the United Kingdom." These last words are interesting. Scotland had ceased to be, and "even that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland" was not to have its own money expended upon it save in a manner that might be conducive to the welfare of the whole. It was a statesmanlike provision, and the way in which it was ultimately carried out reflects credit on the skill, the patriotism, and the energy of the public men of Scotland. Not till 1727, however, were any practical steps taken. The annual overpayment of Scotland had to be ascertained before a final arrangement could be come to. In that year it was decided that a payment down of some £14,000 and an annual charge of £2000 a-year would suffice. An Act was passed appropriating these sums and authorising the king to appoint commissioners for their administration. By royal warrant in the same year the Board of Manufactures was created. It consisted of twenty-one members, and, as Sir Henry Craik records in his 'Century of Scottish History,' it was in the first years of its existence "zealous in its efforts for the encouragement of every kind of commercial enterprise"; and again, "Owing largely to its encouragement, the annual value of the Scottish linen manufacture rose from £103,000 in 1728 to £424,000 in 1758, and doubled the latter

value in the next thirty years." Though its responsibilities for the fisheries lasted for nearly a century, that industry does not appear to have received any very great benefit from the labours of the Board. In 1809 seven additional members were appointed by the Crown, and from the total Board of twenty-eight, seven were to be appointed Commissioners of the Herring Fishery. The Fishery Board as it now exists is the creature of a recent statute, but it is the lineal descendant of these seven members of the Board of Manufactures. While still burdened with the care of the fishing—then and now one of the most important industries of the country—the Board, as early as 1760, established a School of Design, in pursuit of its policy of encouraging its favourite and most promising child, the linen industry. As the late Sir William Stirling Maxwell pointed out, this was "the first School of Design established in these kingdoms at the public expense."

Here at last you come to the connection between the Board of Manufactures and art. Designs were wanted for table-cloths,—and uncommonly good designs are to be found in eighteenth-century Dunfermline linen,—the Board provided them, and, after the custom of Britain, in process of time found itself transformed into the authority, guide, controller, what you will, of art in Scotland. Its school had no rivals; it was never intended to train painters, sculptors, or architects,—still it gave the only training they could get. They

demand more, more was provided. A collection of casts of sculpture—to which reference will be made again—was acquired, and the artists of Scotland could at last see the works of some few at least of the ancients reproduced in plaster. All this was excellent, but still more was wanted. In 1818 the "Institution for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts" was founded. It consisted of men of wealth and leisure, while professional artists were excluded from its directorate. It held annual exhibitions of the works of old masters; and, later, the works of living artists were also hung. By the proceeds of these exhibitions it purchased several good pictures which still adorn the National Collection. An association of Scottish painters had existed for some ten years, and had also held annual exhibitions. When the Institution began to admit the works of living artists to its shows, friction arose, and a struggle, which lasted for years, began. The ultimate result was the disappearance of the Institution and the birth of the Royal Scottish Academy; and Lord Cockburn played no small part in the final establishment of the latter institution on its present basis. With all this the Board of Manufactures seems to have had little to do. When, however, buildings were contemplated, the resources of the Board were drawn upon. Its original capital had grown. The building in Princes Street, Edinburgh, had already been built, mainly at its charges, in order to house the exhibitions of the Royal Insti-

tution, whose name it continues to bear. In 1850 the Prince Consort laid the foundation-stone of the building now occupied by the National Gallery and the Royal Scottish Academy. The site, valued at £40,000, was granted by the Corporation for the nominal sum of £1000, the Treasury gave £30,000, and the Board of Manufactures provided £20,000, as well as the cost of the site and some £3000 for additional ground. The wealth of the Board of Manufactures at this time is explained partly by the fact that a capital sum as well as an annual income was its original inheritance, partly by the fact that its finances were husbanded, while remunerative expenditure—loans repaid with interest and the like—increased rather than diminished its resources.

This summary glance at the history of existing institutions may serve to explain how the present state of affairs arose. This may shortly be stated. The Board of Manufactures is custodian of the National Gallery; it conducts a School of Design, now of little use to the linen manufacture, and in the opinion of painters, of less to them. Founded, as has been said, for the purpose of training designers for the linen manufactories, this school did good work for many generations of students. It appears that in later years its chief purpose was to capture medals at South Kensington: it became a prey to the deadly system of payments by results. That phase passed when the Science and Art Department changed

its methods, but the tradition remained in Edinburgh; and though the school is now in a state of semi-pupilage to the Scotch Education Department, it appears to be gradually verging towards petrification. The cause of its decay is not far to seek. No teacher, however skilful, can do good work without constant stimulus from without. Ruts are not unknown in the universities, and were Edinburgh the only Medical School in Britain, its fame would long since have ceased to attract students from the score of nations outside Scotland who at this moment send their youth to the Alma Mater of the Britains beyond the seas. The School of Design has no rivals: it has no visitors; it appears to pursue a serene course on definite lines without regard to the bent of its pupils or the advancement of public taste. Such, at any rate, are the assertions of many competent to judge, who desire new methods, who aim at different ways. The School and the Board of Manufactures itself are on their defence, and an opportunity is being afforded them for silencing criticism. The Board is also the patron of a School of Applied Art, which is reported to have been of great advantage to architects. Further, it possesses a collection of casts of antique sculpture, badly arranged, no doubt, but still capable of being of use to the student of the history of ancient art. For practical purposes these casts, however, are of no value. The cast-marks are, in most cases, obliterated: successive coats of paint have ob-

scoured the anatomy of the figures, and to the student who desires to become either a painter or a sculptor they are not merely useless, but actually harmful, objects of study. Were they arranged in some sort of order, chronological for choice, they might serve to illustrate a series of lectures, or to amuse a bank holiday crowd. When you think of the admirable collections of well-arranged casts which are to be found in even small German universities; when you remember the space and care which in the Berlin Museum is given to its great collection of plaster, any satisfaction which can be felt at the possession of this dingy crowd of portrait busts, of late Roman copies of Greek originals, and of fragments of the Parthenon coated thick with drab paint, must appear to be based on a deplorable ignorance, not only of what a plaster cast is, but also, alas! of what ancient sculptures exist. The history and development of art cannot be traced here: its highest achievements even are not represented—the Olympian Hermes, the Nike, the Winged Mercury of Naples, the Dancing Faun, to name but some popular favourites; and a crowd of other old familiar faces and figures equally important are wanting. A few hundred pounds judiciously spent would make a representative, an educative, and indeed a beautiful, collection of masterpieces: this lumber-room holds one that is none of these. The Board of Manufactures, however, is not altogether to blame. It has no accommodation for the display of what it has, still less

can it spend money which it has not got in making a new collection.

With regard to its most important charge—the National Gallery—the Board has acted according to its lights—and its purse. Thanks to private benefactions and bequests, the National Collection now has some superb examples of Van Dyck, two of the best Watteaus in existence, excellent Greuzes, two Frans Hals, not perhaps typical examples of that painter's brilliancy, but admirable pictures, a good Rembrandt, and two small landscapes by that master, Gainsborough's celebrated "Mrs Graham," and, happily, a considerable and an increasing number of Raeburns, some of the very highest rank. There are many other good pictures. The Dutch school—Ruysdael, Hobbema, Teniers, Van Ostade, Jan Steen, and many others—are represented, some well, others indifferently. These are the result of gifts and bequests. The French pictures,—the Greuzes, Watteaus, and a Boucher,—with a Sir Joshua and a Murillo, form a collection of peculiar interest. They, with some others, were bequeathed by Lady Murray, whose husband, it is said, inherited them from Allan Ramsay the painter, son of the poet. Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, Borgognone, Canaletto, and others of the later Italian painters, are represented by fairly good examples: Titian is libelled by two very doubtful pictures and an unimportant landscape. A scrap of tempera bears Raphael's name; and a canvas is "assigned to"

Velasquez which, probably, that great painter never saw, assuredly never touched. The existence of the English school of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries cannot be said to be more than suggested. The two canvases by Sir Joshua are in bad condition and unimportant; Gainsborough has no landscape,—only the “Mrs Graham,”—Constable’s name is not in the catalogue. A Crome, a recent gift, shows that painter to advantage. Thirty-eight Turner drawings are on view for one month in each year. Two Wilsons give some idea of what a critic has called his “tranquil and lovely art, the most complete and graceful expression of the Claude convention in existence.” A tiny Cox reminds you that there was a painter of that name; his contemporary, Copley Fielding, and many others are wanting.

Huge canvases by Etty fill much space that might be better employed. Several second-rate landscapes, by men whose work was of passing interest only, are apt to make you forget that Thomson of Duddingston was a painter of whom Scotland is right to be proud, and that Sam Bough, if not a Scotsman, did all his work in Scotland, and how good some of that work was.

Among recent acquisitions by purchase are a brilliant but costly Phillip,—a picture that ought undoubtedly to be in a Scottish National Collection,—an interesting example of Geddes, a painter whose work is of high and inspiring quality,

more appreciated by artists than the vulgar, and two small Wilkies, which can hardly be said to be worth the sum paid for them—upwards of £1000—as art: they have, however, historical interest.

This whole collection, whatever its merits,—and these are undeniably very great,—owes little to public and practically all to private beneficence. The Imperial Treasury has in recent years spent some £6000 as an equivalent to a somewhat larger sum contributed by Mr M’Ewan, to whom the collection owes its important Rembrandt, and the late Mr J. R. Findlay, whose benefactions to art, however, were of much greater extent. He, at a cost of £100,000, built and handed over to the Board of Manufactures a stately edifice where the priceless Museum of the Society of Antiquaries, as well as the National Portrait Gallery, are now accommodated. Were the Treasury to carry out its professed principle of putting down a pound for every pound contributed by private persons, art in Scotland would have a windfall of £100,000 to balance Mr Findlay’s gift. There seems no reason why a claim for this sum should not be made, nor indeed any why it should not be granted. If the National Gallery is to be made worthy its name and pretensions, little less will be required. Were the Treasury to open a credit for this sum, and were its expenditure intrusted to competent hands, in five, ten, or fifteen years the collection would be one of European importance.

The policy of the Board of Manufactures appears to have been to make the Gallery as far as possible representative of the work done by painters of Scottish birth, but the sums it has had to spend have been so trifling that even this modest ambition could not have been carried out without the help of the Royal Scottish Academy—to whom a large proportion of the collection belongs. It is right that all that is best in Scottish art should be shown in a National Collection; but it may be contended, without touching the Thistle too roughly, that Scottish art would probably gain more were its budding practitioners given opportunity of seeing the work rather of those who have succeeded than of those who have only attempted. *L'art n'a pas de pays* is a maxim that the custodians of public collections should never forget.

It is well to make a National Collection representative: it is better to make it good. The action of the Board of Manufactures in its purchases is undoubtedly open to criticism, but the criticism must be silenced when poverty is pleaded. Had its agents and officials been provided with something of a travelling allowance, as is the case in Ireland, advantage might, for instance, have been taken of the Seidelmeyer sale, when a Rubens of exceptional quality, a Corot, and a Constable, might all three have been purchased for a few thousand pounds; and a Raphael of undoubted pedigree and great historical interest might have given occasion to Scottish

patriotism. A body which practically has only windfalls to distribute can have no wide policy, still less can it afford an intelligence department to inform it when, where, and what pictures are in the market. A curator with no travelling allowance, whose time is only partially at the service of his gallery, cannot be asked or expected to know that a collection of unexampled interest is to be dispersed in Paris, or that a banker in Berlin has died bankrupt and has left a few masterpieces which must be brought to the hammer. The Scottish National Gallery has not only been provided with little or no public money to spend, but it has not been given the chance to spend that which it had to the best advantage.

By the employment of the revenue allotted to the Board of Manufactures by the Act of 1727, for the purposes of the National Collections, the Imperial Exchequer has effected a saving of about £2000 a-year. Had Scotland received the same treatment as Ireland, another £1000 would have been contributed for the purchase of pictures. In justice, therefore, the Imperial Treasury owes Scotland, first, £1000 a-year for every year since the Board of Manufactures was burdened with the charge of the National Collections. It might even be contended with logical success that every penny of the income given to the Board in fulfilment of one of the conditions of the Treaty of Union, which has been spent on the National Gallery, ought to be refunded. These two debts to Scotland

from the Imperial Exchequer may not both be claimed—one or other is certainly due. By an Act of 1847 the Board was authorised to appropriate part of its income "towards the purpose of Education in the Fine Arts." It was not contemplated that the entire resources and activity of the Trustees should be diverted to this new field, still less that the whole expense of the National Collections should be defrayed from its slender though historic income. The Scottish members of Parliament are the first culprits in the eyes of their fellow-countrymen, but a Scottish Office which has made no attempt to set this matter right, provides only another instance of the fact that the Government of this country is carried on by a mild species of terrorism. The departments fear the Treasury, but their parliamentary chiefs fear the constituencies more. If the constituencies are silent, then the great god of the money-bags need not be worried. If the constituencies awake, then it is a case of pull devil, pull baker. The result is seldom quite satisfactory, and the indifference of the Scottish Office to the whole question which is now raised shows one of the weakest of the many weak spots in the armour of democracy. Statesmen are rarer than skilful parliamentarians; initiative is curiously lacking in the members of both Houses of Parliament; but admitting that the government of Scotland has for the most part been in the hands of second-rate men, it seems odd that

none should have dealt with a question long discussed and agitated amongst those that had any right to hold opinions. Is the dominance of Philistinism in the House of Commons, and even in another and a higher place, the only explanation?

If art is worthy of official encouragement, that encouragement should be given intelligently—surely a self-evident proposition. The Scottish National Gallery has not more than ten pictures which have been paid for by the Imperial Treasury. So much, by the way, for Sir Michael Hicks Beach's uninformed contention that private benefactors had not done their duty by the Scottish Collection. These ten pictures represent the official encouragement the art of painting has received in Scotland since the Union. Ten pictures in almost two hundred years!

Might not the money have been better spent? Was it worth while to devote a few thousand pounds, spread over so many years—some £20 or £30 a-year—to this purpose? They might have provided an extra charwoman in a Whitehall office. Scotland enjoys representative government; for nearly twenty years it has had a special department of the Executive set apart for the promotion of its interests. The influence of seventy-two Scottish members, plus that of a Secretary of Cabinet rank, has resulted in £20 (or £30) a-year for art. No German can say that the rulers of Scotland love art—let us hope that art loves Scotland,—though too few

Scotsmen have been able to boast of the favours of that exacting mistress. Has this been intelligent expenditure?

Apart, however, from the supineness of the Scottish members of Parliament and the indifference of successive Secretaries, the Imperial Treasury had a duty which it has lamentably neglected. If the Union means anything, it should mean justice. It is the boast of England that whatever qualities it may lack, it has the sense of justice. The nation never does wrong wittingly; but in politics, as in law, ignorance is no excuse. In small matters, as in great, mistakes bring their appropriate Nemesis. The neglect of the Scottish National Gallery will not produce a twentieth-century Bannockburn, or Falkirk, or Culloden. The effect will be less dramatic: its discovery less easy. It is not too much to say, however, that an element of refinement has been lacking, an artistic standard has been longer in growth, an impetus, an incitement, an inspiration for the development of the sense for art of the people has been wanting. Public shows don't do all that their promoters expect of them. But the effect of art is subtle, its influence cannot be assayed, weighed, or docketed. Crowds flock to every National Collection on every public holiday—what is the result? The unintelligent artisan and his wife and baby troop through galleries, and boast that they have been there, much as a Cook's tourist, a Padgett M.P., does India, Egypt, or Rome.

Amongst the crowds there are stray men with eyes to see the truth, to whom Abydos is a revelation, the memory of a Raphael a joy, a Corot a vision of faery. These men—clerks, carpenters, hodmen—who dare say where they are not?—set a standard in their own circle and educate their fellows, and if a National Gallery is to be a show at all, it should give these men of the best, or else label itself a fraud. For the student of art who wishes to paint as the best have painted, for the common man who has looked at nature, whose eye hungers for the beauties of form and colour, the best is hardly good enough. 'Tis often said that the lower classes do not appreciate the best art in any form; that in music, for example, the passing music-hall melody appeals more strongly than the work of a master. No one who has had anything to do with catering for the musical tastes of the Scottish working man could make any such mistake. Wagner may not be appreciated, Grieg may result in long faces and dulled eyes, but a melody of Mozart's, a bit of Handel, or Schubert, or an Andante of Beethoven's, will raise genuine applause from any audience of Primrose Leaguers, Volunteers, Church soiree-makers (or whatever the frequenters of these strange national feasts may be called), such as no jingle of the London streets could evoke. Corrupt public taste by feeding it on rubbish in literature, paint, music, or food, and of course tea, by the aid of coloured tins and the

persistent touting, will supplant porridge and beer, "Snippets" will oust Scott, "the man that broke the bank" at a favourite gambling resort will appeal in time and by the aid of very constant repetition to a generation which in its heart prefers Handel, and German lithographs will seem the highest culmination of colour to folks who never saw a Titian. Art is for the few only in so far that to study and enjoy requires opportunity and leisure, as well as a God-given eye to see. The leisure is not lacking to most classes in the community, when nearly everybody except the professional man has some fourteen hours a-day for sleeping and eating—not to speak of Saturday and Sunday afternoons. The eye to see is to be found in every rank in life. The opportunity alone has been largely wanting all over the United Kingdom. The State has not attempted to guide the public taste in music or the drama. That extravagance was left for "beggary foreigners." It has, however, in these islands professed to set up a standard of painting and sculpture. So far as Scotland is concerned it has stopped there, and, with all respect be it said, has accordingly written itself down "a hass."

The future has some brighter prospect. Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, exercising his hereditary right to do his best for art in Scotland, raised the question of the grant to the Scottish National Gallery on the annual votes last June, and, in an informed and courageous attack upon the Treasury, pre-

sented an unanswerable case for a revision of the whole system of art endowment in Scotland. Lord Balcarras carried a stout lance in support, and upheld the traditions of the loyal Lindsays.

In the short discussion which took place, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, with that lack of sympathy for any part of the Empire outside the domains of the Heptarchy which has characterised him since the days of Sir Bartle Frere, attacked the Board of Manufactures for the injudicious expenditure of money which it never had, criticised the quality of the pictures in the National Collection,—probably because no example of Burne Jones or Holman Hunt or "Professor" Herkomer lumbered its walls,—and asserted that the Gallery had been insufficiently benefited by the generosity of the Scottish people. When, as has been said, out of some 500 exhibits, ten at most are the result of imperial expenditure, the last item of the indictment appears singularly baseless.

The members of the Board of Manufactures are able to defend themselves. One distinguished member, Lord Stormonth Darling, promptly resigned—to the regret of all who understood the position of affairs and hoped for better things. In the letter intimating his resignation, the learned judge took up a position which was logically unanswerable. He said in effect: The Board of Manufactures has been nominated by successive Secretaries for Scotland. If the Scottish Office cannot defend our action or want of action, we

must have lost the confidence of the Executive Government: the sooner we make room for other men the better. The Scottish Office and its representative in the House of Commons uttered no word in defence of the Board, and in consequence the services of one of its most capable and practical members are lost to the country. Lord Stormonth Darling's example was not followed—the other members evidently preferring to wait till official opportunity was given them of stating their case against the Treasury. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, while postponing the grant of £1000 till the days of his successor, offered a Commission of Inquiry. This inquisitorial body will probably be at work ere these words are in type, under the presidency of Mr Akers Douglas. Its report may be expected in a few weeks. It will fail to satisfy the desires of those whose interest in art is informed, if it does nothing more than recommend changes in management and in organisation. These may or may not be necessary—that is a matter for the decision of the committee; but it seems generally agreed that the relations between the School of the Board of Manufactures and that of the Royal Scottish Academy must be adjusted. The distinction between the training that should be given to an artist and that required by an artisan must be remembered: a technical school cannot be of much use to a painter. At present the School of the Board of Manufactures satisfies neither artist nor artisan. Four institutions

in Edinburgh teach drawing—the Historic School of Design, the School of Applied Art, the Scottish Academy's Life School, and the Heriot-Watt College: the relations of these require careful adjustment. The old school has been trying to serve two masters, and has, of course, failed. The School of Applied Art is doing excellent but limited work; the Heriot-Watt College, though rather apt to confuse numbers with success, to regard quantity rather than quality, might have a great future as a place of instruction for workers in iron and brass and wood. It can never hope to be a school of painters, and to attempt to make it an academy of architects seems a mistaken policy. Educationists are apt to devote their care rather to the means than the end. Their ideal is opportunity under strict regulations—a fair field bounded by a code. Let them think more of the student's future work and less of the mere manner of his progress towards an official goal, which they often forget is hardly even the beginning of his life's work. In every branch of education the inevitable tendency of official control is to consider education the end,—whereas it usually is not even the beginning. In Art, school-work can, at the best, provide a rudimentary tool: it must be ground on the stone of experience before it becomes a fit instrument even in the hands of genius. If the Scottish Art schools are to be reorganised with success, clear distinctions must be made between the three classes of students from

the beginning of their training: what will suit the artificer is not what the architect requires; the painter and sculptor need something perfectly different. An attempt to train all three, for more than the elementary portion of their course by the same method, is bound to be disastrous to one or two of the classes, and probably to all three.

To return, in conclusion, to the National Gallery, let its requirements be summarised. These are, briefly, more space and more money, with a larger intelligence in its expenditure. First, the collection must be increased as opportunity arises by the addition of pictures representing Italian and, if possible, Spanish Art, by some examples of the great French landscapists. There are many good Corots in Scotland, and not one, nor a Daubigny, a Rousseau, a Troyon, a Diaz, nor a Jacque, to name but these, in the National Collection. Other blanks easily occur to one, and time, if more than twenty (or thirty) pounds a-year be given, will fill them. Then the present accommodation is insufficient. Since 1889 there has been congestion. In that year six pictures were removed to the Portrait Gallery. In 1896 there was rearrangement, and many pictures by modern Scottish artists were relegated to rooms which are used for the exhibitions of the Academy. Each year these pictures have to be unhung and stored in closets for several months. The Royal Scottish Academy must be provided for elsewhere, and the

whole of its exhibition rooms added to the National Gallery. There is room in the Royal Institution. Designed as a place of exhibition, occupying the finest site in Scotland, this edifice is now tenanted by schools, offices, and the Royal Society. The schools can easily be provided for, and if there be no room for the Royal Society as well as the Academy, it could be housed at a vastly less cost than would be required to build a new National Gallery or a new Academy. A suggestion that an addition should be made to the existing National Gallery buildings will, we trust, meet with the determined opposition of all who care for architecture and for the fair face of Edinburgh.

When the Prince Consort laid the foundation-stone of the National Gallery, he congratulated the people of Scotland that "part of the funds available for its support was the ancient grant which, at the Union of the two kingdoms, was secured towards the encouragement of the fisheries and manufactures of Scotland." His Royal Highness was probably not aware that the ancient grant was not limited to the encouragement of fisheries and manufactures alone. He went on to say that these "important branches of industry had arrived at that stage of manhood and prosperity, that—no longer requiring the aid of a fostering Government—they maintain themselves, and could render aid to their younger and weaker sisters—the Fine Arts." "The improvement of the coun-

try" was the phrase used by the Commissioners for the Union; and even if fisheries and manufactures do not require the help of the Board of Manufactures, it must occur to some of us that before the Fine Arts were made inheritors of this ancient Scottish Fund, other and more practical methods of "improving the country" might have been allowed to state their claims as heirs. The Treasury has been relieved to the extent of £2000 a-year for every year that this "ancient grant" has been used for the purpose of keeping up the National Collections. By a piece of sharp practice the money has been diverted to uses never contemplated. Scotland, even with this annual sum, has for fifty years been treated scurvily; without it art would have had no encouragement. By a Treasury dodge—no more dignified word will fit—money which should have been spent in providing piers for Highland fishermen, or in the encouragement of forestry, has relieved the Imperial Exchequer of claims which art in Scotland was entitled to make. The crofters are always with us, and their needs are recognised as matters of Imperial moment, and rightly so. If, however, the Scottish representatives at Westminster wish to carry on the traditions of the men who did much for Scotland in the eighteenth century, they will see not only that the National Gallery and the Schools of Art receive fair treatment, but that this £2000 a-year of Scottish money is de-

voted to purposes akin to those for which it was intended. Few objects of greater importance than the encouragement of forestry are likely to be suggested, and if the Board of Manufactures be directed to turn its energies, its income, and its savings to this work, it will begin a new era of usefulness for itself and again have the opportunity of rendering enormous benefit to the country. Let it be considered what this would mean. Scotland would at last have a bit of forest land managed, not at the whim nor to furnish the necessities of successive proprietors, but in accordance with definite principles laid down by a far-sighted owner whom "marriage and death and division" can never touch. Oddly enough, much of Scotland has been "made barren" by these causes. When a laird had a daughter to tocher, a plantation was felled, whether it was ready or not: "death and division" are always with us. This dream may not be realised without a larger expenditure than the resources of the Board of Manufactures would provide. Land would have to be purchased before it could be planted. Yet the establishment of an equipped School of Forestry necessitates no great initial expenditure: the difficulty hitherto has been the provision of an annual income. The scheme is too large to be discussed now. The hint has been given; it is for those specially interested in the afforesting of waste places to make the most of a rare occasion.

ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.

X. JOG-TROT.

TRUE to that instinct which finds the Boer, the most insatiable race laying claim to a civilisation of any standard, the squatters who settled upon Hopetown as a site suitable for a village chose a situation as insalubrious as any to be found on the fringe of the Karoo. In a cup-valley of mean dimensions, the little collection of shanties which group round the church and town-hall, enhancing by comparison their appearance of solidity, lay tucked away in the folds of the bare dusty hills, so that if tracks did not converge upon the village with the regularity of spokes to the axle of a wheel there would be no evidence of its existence to the passer-by outside a narrow radius. It was not until the advance-guard covering the New Cavalry Brigade topped the actual bluff above the hamlet that the temporary importance of Hopetown was realised. The dip in which the village lay was black with the transport of many columns, and the dust and smoke raised by the thousands of animals and hundreds of cooking fires formed a heavy haze which, covering the township as with a pall, hung half-way between the level of the valley and the overhanging brae where the advance-guard stood halted. It was not an inviting picture.

The dust and vapour seemed unable to face the perpendicular violence of the midday sun; the only perceptible movement in the middle distance was the shimmer of the atmosphere, squirming as it were under the relentless heat; while the great pall of dust and smoke, as if ashamed to raise its head, mushroomed out against the hillsides with undecided edging.

As we stood gasping for some breath of air to relieve the burden of oppressive heat, it seemed that the valley was some great stew-pot of the *inferno*, and that Hopetown was simmering at its bottom.

The brigadier cantered up to the advance-guard, and throwing his reins to his orderly, made a brief survey of the topographical approaches to Hopetown.

Brigadier. "Well, there is not much of De Wet left in this corner of the world. All the commandoes¹ of the Hunt seem to have forgathered here and to be having a day off. What a hole of a place—ideal, from the Dutchman's point of view. Why, the smell of it reaches up here. But here comes a robber in a pink 'beaver': we shall soon know all about it."

A diminutive boy in staff kit cantered up and demanded information about the column.

¹ Jocular term borrowed from the Dutch for small British columns.

Staff Officer. "What column is this?"

B. "The New Cavalry Brigade."

S. O. "Never heard of you. Who told you to come in here? Who commands you?"

B. "Steady, my fledgling, one question at a time. You are given to heaping matters, I see, which is a bad habit in one so young. I will answer one of your questions, the last one. I command this column: and now you will answer me. What columns are in Hopetown?"

S. O. "Sorry, sir, but——"

B. "Don't apologise. I know I don't look like a general, but it doesn't help you out of your difficulties to say so. You only slip into it worse every time; now, then, to the columns?"

S. O. "Knox's, Pilcher's, Plumer's, and Paris's."

B. "Good; and what is the latest news about De Wet?"

S. O. "He has broken out east across the railway; half his force went up north and half crossed by Paauwpan."

B. "Who are on him?"

S. O. "I am not quite sure; but I hear that Haig, Thorneycroft, Crabbe, and Henniker are either following him or trying to cut him off."

B. "And what are four columns doing halted here in this *dorp*?"

S. O. "They are all stone cold."

B. "The price of losing De Wet. Now, young feller, just you hie back to *your* general, Charles Knox, I suppose, and tell him that the New Cavalry Brigade is coming right in here, but will not worry him long, as

it has orders to be off to-night. (*The youth salutes and goes to the right-about, while the brigadier continues to his staff*) Just as well to let Knox know that I am on my own. I must invent a special mission from Pretoria, otherwise he may seize me like the last fellow, and the future state of this column might then be worse than the first."

In the meantime the brigade led down into the noisome basin which holds Hopetown, and took up temporary quarters on the first patch against the water into which it could squeeze its long line of transport. It wedged in between two columns, and the bad condition of both gave evidence of the severity of the work in which they had recently been engaged. As columns, when they had first entered upon the chase after De Wet, they had each been five or six hundred strong; now, perhaps, between them they could count five hundred mounted men, while of this number not more than a third were fit to do a twenty-mile trek at a better pace than a walk. Yet each, three weeks earlier, had started from the railway newly equipped with remounts.

If any are sufficiently interested to cast about for a reason for the hopeless state of the columns in the Colony at this period, they may possibly find in the experiences of the brigade a solution of the remount question which has so puzzled the more intelligent students of the war. The column newly equipped at the railway was generally worse off for horse-

flesh and less mobile than the force which had not been within reach of the Remount Department for months. The procedure was in this wise. The column commander struggled gasping into the haven of relief afforded by the railway. He had barely issued to his men and horses a full ration when the telegraph began to talk. Down came the brief little order from Pretoria, "You will entrain for Cypher Ghat without delay. Trains will reach you by three this afternoon." In vain would the column commander plead for rest for man and beast. The fiat had gone forth. All protest was met with a single reiteration of the original order, with perhaps the adjunct, "Remounts will be awaiting you to replace casualties." What chance had the horses which had been overridden and underfed for the last twelve days? Those which could hobble were thrust into close, dung-blocked trucks, and whirled away any distance from fifty miles to a thousand. Water they got when the railway officials saw fit to arrange the necessary halt in the necessary place, rest for them there was none. But the column commander who was new at the job could plume himself that he would be restocked and start with a new lease of life at his destination. Vain thought! He found awaiting him at the end of his journey either the sweepings of the country-side—such animals as had been rejected as unfitted for military service by marauding Boer and

pushing column leader in turn, and finally collected by the zealous "crawler" and duly reported in the "weekly bag" as captured from the enemy. Or if sweepings were not available, he would find waiting for him absolutely soft and raw importations, which had cost the taxpayer £40 apiece a few weeks previously,—the one as useless for the purpose required as the other. Rejection by a not over-fastidious enemy disposes of the one; of the other it was as mad a proceeding as taking a horse straight off grass and backing him to win you a stake at even weights with trained horses. The millions of the public money which lie wantonly strewed over the South African veldt would appal even the most phlegmatic of financiers. The waste in horse-flesh is inconceivable; and the man with the stiff upper lip who refused to realise that it takes gentle breaking to bring the troop-horses to the perfection which enables them to cover for six consecutive days thirty miles a day with 20 stone on their backs, has added pence to the present burden of the income-tax. The taxpayer is naturally upset. He has cause. He seeks mental relief in philippics against the cavalry officer,—the man to whom he owes so much. He damns his intelligence and damns his breeding, and then, having railed sufficiently, pays cheerfully, with heavy self-satisfaction that some one has at last been put in his proper place, and that a lesson so

necessary has not really been so dearly purchased at the price. Poor innocent fool! the British taxpayer brings to mind that dear fat smiling millionaire, denizen of a West End club, to whom every day impecunious fellow-members would propose a game of *picquet* or *écarté*, well knowing that it was the quickest way in London to earn a certain £200. Your Commissions may sit upon the educational standard of your officers, upon the sequel to your own folly in remount purchase: but will your inquiry ever reach the foundations of this edifice that you have condemned? I think not. One or two scapegoats will satisfy the British public upon those few occasions when it rises up in a thirst for blood. Willingness to pay rather than interfere will do the rest. And the spirit of apathy which is characteristic of the nation, in spite of the occasional outbursts of interested indignation, will prevent a true disclosure of the horrid facts as long as the war is unfinished. Once a peace is ratified the national interest in both the present, past, and future state of its army will be as abruptly and effectually severed as the magazine charge in the Lee-Enfield rifle when the cut-off is snapped home, forgetful of the fact that our next enemy may not be as merciful as the Boer; that he will not stand by and reap no benefit from our failures; that in a few brief hours a situation may arise in which no wealth of bullion can save

us. It will take just one disaster such as this—a disaster which will carry annihilation with it—to cause the British nation too late to take just stock of its limitations. Then in grief it will remember that he whom it treated as a mad *fakir* was indeed a true prophet.

The state of the New Cavalry Brigade, as it wedged itself in between the two ghosts of mounted columns, was in itself an object-lesson. Those who have followed the interests of this little command through the foregoing chapters will have seen that it had not been called upon to make any exceptional effort to sap it of its reserve forces. In fact, it had simply been marched and countermarched along dusty tracks at the whim of a superior officer. Yet under this mild usage the column had arrived back at a base with 25 per cent of its animals useless and an equal proportion whose days of usefulness were numbered. The sole reason for this was the fact that the animals had never been trained to long distances in a trying climate with 20 stone on their backs. The care of the brigadier or the watchfulness of the squadron officers availed nothing when the green remount was put to the twenty-mile test. But you will say, How, if this is really the case, was it to be avoided? An intelligent anticipation of events should have told those who started their campaign with the advantage of the three months' failure of their predecessors

what would be the approximate remount requirements. The British nation would have backed the demands of this intelligent anticipation, not in thousands, but in millions, and by so doing would have saved not thousands but millions. If the original remount depots had been other than "Siberias" for incompetent officers from the outpost line, or if the recommendations of the senior cavalry and remount officers had been listened to, we should have had less of the saddling of raw horses straight from the train and ship,—less of the stupidity which expected them to do the work which can only be done by a system of gradual and careful training and acclimatisation. It is as suicidal and expensive to put green horses into the field as it is to put untrained men. Yet at this period of the war we were practising both these expedients, and wondering why the Burgher was not subjugated, and why the income-tax steadily increased.

The stories of sinful waste and incompetent groping for a means out of the tangle do not connect themselves intimately with this history. But no doubt

remains that the system which was at this period in practice was vicious in the extreme. In a word, the whole of the British mobile strength in South Africa was directly based on the railway communication. This gave a column at the utmost a twelve days' lease of life, which meant that the troops must keep within a six days' march of the permanent way or starve. This limited the area of effective operation; and while we were wasting our energy and horse-flesh against the enemy's raiders, the bulk of their resistance was calmly ploughing beyond the reach of castigation. The convoy may be slow and may be vulnerable, the fortified post may be isolated and invite attack; but as military expedients in a large country both are superior to the base-bound column.¹

The brigadier left the brigade-major to settle the column into its quarters, and taking the Intelligence officer with him, made straight for the hub of Hope-town's universe. The hotel and the telegraph-office stood close together. Outside the former a little scarlet flaglet fluttered, its

¹ It is interesting to note that eventually this reasoning was brought home to the direction of operations in South Africa. After practically a year of the unsatisfactory groping referred to in the text, the conception of the blockhouse system enabled mounted troops to operate far into the vital interior of the country without returning to the railway. It must be understood that the main use of the blockhouse-line was not to stretch an impassable *chevaux-de-frise* from point to point, but to furnish a series of posts, which ensured the safety of the convoys which followed their trend. By this means it was possible to keep columns operating in the interior supplied with food and forage. So much so, that towards the end many columns had not been near a town or railway for weeks. The conception of the "drives," which ultimately brought the peace movement to a head, was an afterthought, which is commonly attributed in South Africa to the sagacity of that intrepid and versatile young cavalry leader, Colonel Mike Rimington.

double point showing that the general officer who sported it claimed divisional rank,—a quaint claim at this period of the war, when lieutenant-generals were parading the theatre at the head of little *paarde kommandos* three to four hundred strong. The brigadier spotted the flag, and then edged off to the telegraph-office. "We will first make things straight with K. Then we will consult this new horror with the oriflamme that we have stumbled into!" Three tired clerks, two soldiers and a civilian, were trying to cope with the telegraphic efforts of five columns. The brigadier dictated his message to the Intelligence officer. It was a bare announcement of arrival, duplicated to Pretoria and De Aar.

Telegraph Operator. "There is no chance of any private wires going through for at least forty-eight hours; post would be quicker!"

Brigadier. "Then you will just have to clear the line."

T. O. "Can only do that for general officers."

B. "That is all I ask you to do,—so here you are!"

T. O. Beg pardon, sir; but are you a general,—you are not like most generals. Yes, sir, it's nice and short. I can get this off in about five minutes. They clear the line, of course, at De Aar; we are only working to De Aar. I have quite a lot of messages for you, sir; they have been coming all last night." (The operator handed out the bundle of telegraphic jetsam.)

The telegrams contained the

usual proportion of hysterical nonsense from the De Wet expert and various intelligence and departmental centres; also a direct order from the general at De Aar to proceed without delay to Orange River Station and there entrain for Jagersfontein Road in the Orange River Colony. This at least was satisfactory, as it meant without fail good-bye to the hated Karoo. The news telegram was interesting reading, though a little indefinite in its wording. In the light of subsequent knowledge the information which it conveyed was much as the brigadier had anticipated. De Wet, after the sack of Strydenburg, had doubled north,—in fact, had almost retraced his original line. He had thrown a feint up in the direction of Mark's Drift, and thus drawn the pursuit temporarily off the true line, but had as suddenly swung to the east. Here he had again been struck by the indefatigable Plumer, temporarily renovated and with sufficient steam up to take him a short spurt. That spurt was sufficient to rob De Wet of his last impedimenta, to cause him to bifurcate in his flight. Part of the pursued rabble went north, half hurled itself across the Cape Government Railway in the vicinity of Paauwpan. Plumer's spurt was just too short to bring about the definite result required, and he crawled into Hopetown to further revive his energy. In the meantime it was learned from prisoners and other sources that the group of fugitives try-

ing to cross the Orange River north of Hopetown was Judge Hertzog's and Pretorius's party. Brand had made the passage at Mark's Drift, while De Wet, with the ex-President, was still in the Colony heading for Philipstown. Then hope ran high. The Orange River was in flood, while stops were in front of and south of the harried guerilla. Thorneycroft and Henry in the vicinity of Colesberg; Crabbe and Henniker on his tail; Grenfell, Murray, and others strung out in an ever-decreasing circle! Swollen river in front, desperate Englishmen behind, what chance had the residue of the invaders now! But the brigadier shook his head as he pricked out the positions on the map. "There is no mention of troops moving down from the north. What does Napoleon say about rivers as barriers in war?—he classes them as negotiable obstacles, after deserts and mountains, right low down on the scale. Flood or no flood, ole man De Wet will cross that river just wherever and whenever he pleases; and if we have no one north of it either to pick him up or to head him while crossing, he will get clear away, and we shall have let slip another opportunity, by crass stupidity and failure to make use of the very signal advantages which circumstances have placed in our way. Plumer and my brigands get to Orange River Station to-night. Even if they have truckage waiting for us, we shall not march clear of Jagersfontein Road until the day after

to-morrow. That will give ole man De Wet twenty-four hours' clear lead. I must say that I cannot see the hand of genius in the fitting of this plan to the map. This is the line that both Plumer and I should take—Orange River Station, Ramah, Luckhoff, Fauresmith. One of us halt at Luckhoff; Kimberley send a column to Koffyfontein; Bloemfontein another to Petrusburg and Ab-ramskraal; while Fauresmith and Jagersfontein form bases for columns sent to them from Springfontein; and then with a consistent and strong line of outposts we might have stopped his main road north, although we should be too late to man the river. But, anyhow, I'll have a try at convincing them at headquarters that I am a better man outside than inside a cattle-truck. So here goes. Mr Intelligence, paper and ink and take it down, and mind it is to go in cipher!" The brigadier then roughly drew a comparison in the saving of time involved by a direct march upon Fauresmith from Orange River Station and transport by rail, closing the message with a promise to be in Fauresmith the second day after leaving the railway.

It then became a question of a square meal at the caravanserai. The concentration of five columns had taxed the capabilities of the little hostel beyond endurance. All that they could furnish was milk and butter. But they were prepared to cook any food that was brought, so with an effort it was possible to arrive at a

meal. There was no lack of entertainment, however. One of the columns had sent out 300 men and a pompom in pursuit of Hertzog's fugitives, and the force had just returned with quite a haul of prisoners. They had come across the rear-most of them just as they were in the act of crossing the river in a rickety punt, which vessel had been scientifically rendered unseaworthy by a well-directed belt of pompom-shells. Examination of the bushes on the near bank of the river showed that dozens of Boers had literally gone to earth. The river approach was full of rain-fissures and water-cracks, and the men spent the whole morning actually bolting Burghers from cover, much in the same manner as a pack of beagles is well used to aid sportsmen to shoot a rabbit-covert.

It was not until you found opportunity to see these prisoners that you realised what this war meant to these farmer guerillas, and the influence which the failure of De Wet's invasion must have made on the subsequent operations. Amongst the whole 200 prisoners that were brought in that day, there was only one man—a man who called himself Hertzog's secretary—who was completely dressed. The majority had neither coats nor boots; and their remaining costume was in the last stage of decay. Nor had the inner man been nurtured any better than the outer. They were emaciated and drawn with hunger and hardship. They rose out of their holes with

their hands above their heads like great gaunt ghosts with saucer eyes. They were in such a state that surrender brought to them no pangs of remorse. They welcomed it as a means to live, and their ravenous supplication for food was not the least pathetic setting to the scene. They are a strange paradox these people. One could not help admiring the patriotism—or is it magnetic power of their leaders?—which kept in the field, in spite of all its dismal horrors of death and suffering, men who had but to surrender to return to their share of the comfort of living. If it is true patriotism, then you feel inclined to raise your hat. But if it is only fear of the knout, then hanging is the best end you could wish the leaders, who are able to control such suffering, and who, in the hope of personal advancement, refuse to alleviate it. But what is more humiliating than anything else, is the realisation that these miserable creatures are an enemy able to keep the flower of England's army in check, to levy a tax of six millions a-month upon this country, and render abortive a military reputation built upon unparalleled traditions. This is indeed a bitter reflection, a painful reminder that the advance of science has placed the athlete and the cripple almost upon an equality in armed encounter.

It was an interesting gathering that partook of dinner in the quaintly boarded little dining-room of the Hopetown

tavern. Four column commanders and their staffs filled the tables, which betimes were the mess-boards of the bank clerks and shop-walkers of the village. The soldiers, however, had some right to be in temporary possession, since the viands were their own. The two little serving-maids, daughters of a Dutch proprietress, were alive to the unusual importance of their duties, and had carefully prepared for the part. Print dresses were dispensed with, and they stood arrayed in their Sabbath frocks, covered with the becoming apron-pinafore which the country affects, and with carefully braided hair, not innocent of some fatty dressing. Quaint little maids—why should we quiz them?—they were there dressed and determined to do their best. At the first table sat a middle-aged major-general, a man of kindly face and habit. As a soldier—a fierce, intrepid leader—can you not remember the day when he lay amongst the scrub of the Modder bank with his chest laid bare by a raking bullet, and refused to be carried to hospital,—even entreated the doctors to let him carry out the mad effort, worthy of a Marshal Ney, which had been intrusted to him, and which all but cost him his life. Yet, so strange is the complex nature of the Englishman, this man, whom the breath of war could rouse to a courage almost super-human, spent his leisure in the toils of artistic photography, and evinced more demonstrative pleasure over a successful

plate than in a battlement of arms made sweet in victory.

At the next table sat a leader of another kind, or rather a different development of the same type of quiet unassuming English gentleman,—the gallant, thrusting, never-tiring Plumer. Small spare man of dainty gait and finish, yet moulded in a clay which hitherto has shown no flaw in the rougher elements of the soldier. It is no inconsiderable tribute to his sterling qualities as a leader that he gained both the confidence and devotion of the rough Bushboys from the Antipodes, with whom he was associated. But however dainty and unassuming the shell, it is the spirit which fashions the man, and he who would continue in the shade of Plumer's banner must ride with all the cunning he may possess to prove himself worthy of the lead he follows. At another table sits Pilcher, the man on wires. Hot-headed he may be, yet withal crafty in war: worthy representative of the race of young soldiers which the Nile has bred. Then there was our own brigadier, as buoyant in spirit and as light of heart as any of his ancestors who played the gallant in the Court of Versailles, yet possessing beneath the veneer of gaiety a steadfast tenacity of purpose, which favoured the quartering added from the north of the Tweed. The room was full of men—men who for eighteen solid months had been engaging in the stern realities of war. The leaders who had exercised the balance of life and death,

the juniors who had looked a thousand dangers squarely in the face. If success in war was only made up in the excellence of fighting men, then England could stand out pre-eminent. Unfortunately, success lies in business-soldiers *plus* fighting men. It is in her business-soldiers that England's weakness lies.

It is only when the intention is to do something desperate that one is able to appreciate the obstructive temperament of military officialdom. The whole system teems with "wait-a-bit" thorns; and in such rare cases when difficulties do not exist, some jack-in-office is certain to arrive with the sole object and intention of inventing them. Now, the brigadier had put forward a simple and rational plan,—so simple and rational that the lieutenant-general at De Aar had willingly acquiesced, for this general was at least a man to whom his juniors might look and be certain of support. But after the general there arose a pack of snarling juniors, whose only energy seemed to be expended in an endeavour to frustrate the plans of others. The brigade had orders to march by night the six miles which separate Hoptown from Orange River Station, but long before it took the road the departmental spirit of opposition had commenced to make itself felt.

First came a "clear-the-line" message from the transport officer, ordering the brigadier to hand over his mule-transport to another column commander. It is true that he promised to

re-equip him with mule-transport at the destination of his railway journey; but the brigadier had had experience of the director of transport's promises. This was an impediment which it was possible to ignore; but it was followed by another more serious. The supply people appeared to have been hurt on the score of the short notice which had been given to them, and raised a host of difficulties. But the climax was reached when the Intelligence Department volunteered the information that it would be useless for the brigade to apply for maps, as they had none in stock; but they added, "As a substitute we are sending the best local guide procurable."

The brigadier had met the first of these hindrances with equanimity, but the last burden upset the camel's load. "Did you ever see such fellows? they are bent on thwarting me every time. I shall ignore them right through; the only attention the man who has the audacity to offer me a low horse-thieving local expert as the substitute for a gross of maps deserves is to be court-martialled and stamped out of existence on sight. You need not telegraph all that, Mr Intelligence; but you may send a message to the general in De Aar to inform him that, having received his orders, I shall leave no stone unturned to carry out the scheme he has sanctioned, in spite of local obstruction. That is to be the sense of the message, and it ought to cover any subsequent act of disobedience which we undertake. Don't make answers

to any of these subordinate fry; we will just march at nine o'clock to-night to Orange River Station, raid the place of such rations as we can lay hands on, and then, maps or no maps, take off our caps to Cape Colony for ever."

It was just as well that the brigadier had made his own arrangements, for both Plumer and Pilcher forgathered at Orange River that night, and the stationmaster, with the bonhomie bred of a long period spent in disappointing everybody with whom he came in contact, informed each column-commander in rotation that the best he could promise them was truckage sufficient for one squadron on the following day, two squadrons perhaps on the second day, and the whole of the mounted troops ordered by rail certainly not before a week or ten days. We just ask you to make a short study of this situation. The episode which is here related was not a farce—far from it: it was a serious endeavour on the part of the British army in South Africa to capture or destroy a noted brigand called De Wet. A possibility of bringing about this desired result was certainly within view, and the British army was straining every nerve to avail itself of a unique opportunity. To the humble subaltern, who was but a microscopic atom of that huge British army, this herculean effort partook rather of the nature of burlesque than of serious war. But it was noth-

ing to the burlesque which was shortly to be enacted on Orange River Station platform.

As day broke other columns concentrated on the station buildings, until the inartistic surroundings of the little centre became black with men and animals. In appearance it might well be likened to a swarm of bees in temporary possession of a window-frame. Amongst the troops waiting for rolling stock was a wild company of over-sea Colonials—men of independent character and fine physique, who had already done their year in the country, and to whom the sight of a permanent way and the smell of a station-yard brought memories of homes in a distant land, and transports tossing on Table Bay, and a promise that had been made to them by some one, that they should return home the next time they touched the railway. Their dash after De Wet had been undertaken rather in the spirit of a favour. "Give us this one turn more, and we will let you go!" And now they were back at the line, rumour had it that their belated truckage had been ordered to convey them back to the Orange River Colony. They accepted this rumour as a breach of faith, and feeling ran high in the contingent—ran so high that it overlapped and swamped the tiny pillar of discipline which thirteen months of campaigning had built into the constitution of the corps. The climax was reached on the morning of the concentration at Orange River Station. The colonel

commanding the over-sea Colonials stood chatting with our brigadier. We were waiting for the shoddy platform buffet to open its hospitable doors, when suddenly we were aware of the whole of his contingent marching in correct files on to the platform. A full private was in command. He issued his orders clearly. "Halt!"—"Pile arms!"—"Stand clear!"—"Fall out!" And then a deputation of three advanced towards us. They saluted their colonel with all military punctiliousness, and stood as stiffly to attention as is possible with the irregular.

Colonial Colonel. "What does this mean, men?"

Spokesman. "If you please, sir, we have mutinied" (*the supporting deputation gravely nodded their assent*).

C. C. "The devil you have!—but do you realise what it means when you mutiny on active service?"

S. "Well, you see, sir, it is putting it rather strongly, perhaps, to say that we *have* mutinied. But you see, sir, our time is up, and we have determined not to go on the trek any more. Our last trek was a favour. We were promised that we should be sent home the next time we struck the railway, and we hold by this promise."

C. C. "Men, don't be fools. Go back to your camp. You have no need to believe that faith will be broken with you. But think of the example you are setting to the rest of the troops here! Think of what the people at home will say!

You don't realise what you are liable to for mutiny."

S. "Well, sir, we don't exactly mean this as mutiny. This is just a protest against being kept out here against our will and agreement. You will accept it, sir, in the spirit that it is given—a protest, sir!"

C. C. "Very good. Go back to your lines!"

The deputation saluted, returned to the fallen-out contingent, which gravely unpiled its arms and marched back to its lines, amid a little desultory cheering from some few bystanders who realised what was taking place.

The brigadier turned to the Colonial colonel and said, "Well, that is the quaintest attitude that I have ever seen taken up by a body of men. Do they often treat you to these protests?"

C. C. "Sometimes. They are children in many respects. I can tell you they need gentle handling. They have made their protest, and for a week or so will be quite satisfied. I even fancy that I shall be able to get them to do yet another trek if the authorities insist; but it makes it devilish hard for us to deal with these fellows, when faith is so constantly broken with them. They are as quiet as mice when I get them away from the railway. But once they see metals they smell seawater, and it upsets them. They are fine but quaint fellows!"

The brigadier acquiesced. He would have been just the man to have commanded these men.

And he would have improved a situation such as the one we had just witnessed. Yet it would be impossible to overrate the delicacy of that situation. A tactless man, full of the power which long generations of military discipline has built round the sanctity of a commission, in a few short sentences would have converted the scene of incipient mutiny into open intractable rebellion. As it was, the mutiny was taken in the spirit in which it had been made, and terminated to the satisfaction of all concerned.¹

The New Cavalry Brigade became almost complete at Hopetown, as the brigadier was able to collect his last missing squadron of the 21st King's Dragoon Guards, which hitherto had been taking part in the De Wet hunt with another column. A portion of the Mount Nelson Light Horse, however, was still missing; but the brigadier did not worry about them, and felt himself complete, as he took the precaution to issue orders that he was about to proceed by rail to Jagersfontein Road. But, as the narrative of the next forty-eight hours is to show, the military system prevailing in South Africa was such that it was only by a miracle that the most sagacious of leaders were able to accomplish any exceptional result by strategy. The brigadier had schemed to bring about a result which could only be arrived at by

the most rigid concealment of plan and direction.

It must be borne in mind that the Boers at this period of the campaign had the most perfect system of intelligence. There was not a district in the Transvaal or Orange River Colony which was not under the command of a local commandant, who with a following of fifty to a hundred men maintained a system of observation-posts throughout the length and breadth of his district, and who apparently had the means of conveying to some central organisation early intelligence of the movement of every British column. This may appear to the casual observer as an enormous undertaking, but in reality it was nothing of the kind. It was absolutely essential to the Boer cause that a considerable portion of their less valuable fighting material should thus be distributed over the length and breadth of the guerilla area. Owing to the great distances to be traversed in South Africa, every Dutchman had a local knowledge of his own district which could never be acquired in a country of rapid communication such as England. To local men were apportioned the net-work of observation-hills in which the country abounds. They lived upon the hill-tops all day, and returned either to farms or other places of security during the night. Their method of inter-communication was by means of

¹ This very contingent continued to serve with distinction for quite a considerable period after the little episode narrated above.

Kaffirs, and through this agency news could travel by relay as easily and rapidly as it is carried by a similar system amongst the natives of India. A Kaffir will dog-trot ten miles in two hours; consequently without much effort Boer information would travel a hundred and twenty miles in twenty-four hours. Added to this, every woman remaining upon a farm was of the nature of an intelligence agent, and after the women had been removed, for the most part to the concentration camps, the majority of Kaffir kraals served the same purpose. It was this means of information which made the Boer resistance possible: it was to this system of espionage that De Wet owed the success of his meteor-like career.

The Intelligence centre at De Aar being unable to furnish the requisite maps, took upon itself to supply "the best local guide procurable." It is mainly to the services rendered by this local guide that De Wet owes his escape on this particular occasion. The brigadier was fully alive to the existence of the Boer local espionage; but it must be said with truth that he had not realised to what extent De Wet's *clientèle* included the men who possessed the confidence of the De Wet expert and the intelligence faculty at De Aar. If he had realised this he would have been content to have made his dash, trusting to the almost supernatural instinct of the Tiger. As it was, the Tiger was allowed to sever his connection with the column, and to

be replaced by one of the many "sitters upon the fence" who have for months conducted to the prolongation of the war.

The latest information with regard to the movements of De Wet had been signalled by Haig, who appeared to hold the view that he had the arch-guerilla hemmed in against the unfordable flood of the Orange River in the immediate neighbourhood of the Colesberg waggon-bridge. Now the brigadier, as has already been shown, did not believe in the unfordability of rivers. Moreover, the Orange River in front of us was falling, and further information, which had been arrived at through a rather peculiar channel, furnished us with the details of a letter of instruction which had been sent by De Wet when at Strydenburg to Field-cornet Botmann, then commanding the local commando in the Fauresmith district, instructing him to collect as many horses and Cape-carts as possible, and to keep them in readiness at Philipolis in order to expedite his (De Wet's) journey north. Basing his plans upon this information, the brigadier determined to place himself on the line Jagersfontein-Fauresmith just at the moment when De Wet halted to catch his breath at Philipolis. He would then detach half his force to cover his right, facing south, leaving it to Plumer or other troops despatched from the railway at Jagersfontein Road to cover and close his left flank. To frustrate the vigilance of Botmann's observation-posts it

was the brigadier's intention to make Fauresmith by forced marches. It had to be considered that there was only a small margin in which it would be possible to arrive at Fauresmith with advantage. Too early an arrival would have warned and headed De Wet before the flank - detached column was in position to co-operate effectually; while dalliance on the line of march would have missed him altogether. It was a manœuvre which could not have been successful without some element of luck, but which was destined to be rendered abortive by the co-operation of the local guide.

As it was, the man was not taken into the brigadier's confidence until he issued his marching orders to his force, a bare two hours before the column was destined to take the road. The guide had joined the command with all the pomp and dignity attaching to a following of five mounted native retainers. He was an Africander of a most marked type, and opened his connection with the Intelligence officer with the information that he was not an ordinary guide, that he only took his instructions from the officer commanding the column, and that he reported alone to him. The brigadier smiled at his pedantry, remarking that if he did his job it did not matter much to whom and by whom he made his reports.

In order to facilitate the early movement of the brigade, it had moved across the now historic railway - bridge at

Orange River and camped in the Herbert district, with the report that Kimberley was its destination. For the sake of precaution the brigadier had thrown out a strong outpost into the hilly country covering the road to Ramah. Shortly after midnight, the Intelligence officer was sent out with the final instructions to this outpost. As he stumbled amongst the rocks he saw in the dim light which the young moon diffused a mounted native moving along a track below him. The native would have remained unrecognised, as the distance was considerable, if his horse had not been a piebald of peculiar marking. The mounted native "had the legs of" the Intelligence officer; but as he disappeared in the shadows of night the Intelligence officer's apprehensions were allayed by hearing the man challenged by a picket from the outpost. In five minutes the Intelligence officer reached the picket to find the native gone, and the corporal in charge stated that the man had shown a pass signed by the Intelligence officer, Orange River Station. This hardly appeared to be satisfactory; but the corporal, like so many young British non-commissioned officers, had had no directions concerning native scouts and passes, and not being trained to take upon himself precautionary responsibility, had been duly frightened and coerced by the scrawl of a hieroglyphic on a remnant of blue paper.

The Intelligence officer considered the whole affair with

great suspicion, and when he returned to the headquarters bivouac he walked down to the new guide's *entourage* and took stock of his "boys" and animals. One of the five "boys" was missing, also a piebald pony of peculiar marking which had caught his eye earlier in the day. The Intelligence officer held his peace, but, armed with this information, determined to watch future developments, and flung himself down on the roadside to snatch half an hour's sleep before the forward march should commence.

It was the brigadier's intention to seize Luckhoff—a little hamlet situated half-way between Orange River and Fauresmith—that morning by a *coup de main*. To accomplish this he detached half his force without baggage, under the command of the colonel of the 21st, to move as rapidly as circumstances would permit, and to occupy and hold the town until he himself arrived with the main body later in the day. The newly acquired guide was detailed to accompany the advanced column. By nine o'clock in the morning this advanced column was in position to bear down upon the little prairie township. The colonel of the 21st, well versed in the tactics best suited to surprise a village on the open plain, extended a squadron into a horn-like formation, and galloped, as he imagined, to the surprise of the inhabitants. The sequel was very different to what had been expected. Save for women, the village was deserted, while from the

high ground and hills to the north-east, a fully prepared posse from Botmann's commando opened a heavy rifle-fire on such of the cavalrymen as had been detached to occupy the farther approaches. Our Intelligence guide, who by some means had disappeared during the later progress of the advance, was at once in evidence as soon as the town was entered. He rode straight as a die to a small store which ornamented the main street. Here he was met by the native of the piebald pony, and it was then discovered that our friend the guide was likewise the owner of the store. The first comment of the intelligent reader will be that the action of the guide was clumsy, both in design and execution, and that a column thus duped deserves to meet with ill success. The guide's action was undoubtedly clumsy, but it must be remembered that he had had long experience of the British: he knew as well as every other man of similar calibre in South Africa how far he could afford to play with their forbearance. As far as the staff of the New Cavalry Brigade was concerned, once the guide was admitted to the confidence of the general the possibility of checking his further machinations was beyond their reach. The fault lay with those who had given him his credentials. Yet there was no proof against the man: he allowed that the store was his, he admitted that he had sent the native, claimed that he had permission to send

that native, who, he assured us, was one of the most trusted and loyal scouts that the British had. For what reason had he sent him? The answer was simple enough. He had only sent him with a message to the man who was looking after his store, with instructions not to open it after daybreak lest it should be looted by friend and foe alike.

The only remark in the way of comment made by the brigadier was to the effect that "One only learns by experience." He refused, and doubtless rightly, to accede to the wishes of others on his staff that the man should be executed out of hand. He sent him back to Cape Colony, where, doubtless, he gave a satisfactory explanation, and returned again to some position of trust and honour in the British service.

People in England, and those who have had experience of this extraordinary campaign, will never realise the extent to which the British army in South Africa has reposed confidence in knaves and scoundrels. For one man that may have been shot or hanged, there will have been a hundred who have gained the confidence of the British to betray it either to their own use or that of the enemy. No one could ever know or assess the extent of the knavery which has arisen, flourished, and grown fat in this long - protracted war. And what a field for sharps and knaves! Was not the control of the whole country in the

hands of straightforward and fair-thinking English officers, —men whose word was their bond, and who never thought to distrust their fellow-men, until their fellow-men thrust their barefaced iniquities upon them. Believe me, that under the Southern Cross it is not the Dutch who are vile.

But although we could not hope now to fall upon the arch-guerilla with the full weight of first surprise, yet from the nature of the situation in which he had been engaged during the last three weeks his theatre and resources were of necessity circumscribed. The situation even yet presented possibilities, and the brigadier settled to remain longer in Luckhoff than he had originally intended, sending a patrol to reconnoitre down as far as the Orange River. This patrol met with considerable success. It was commanded by the same pessimistic subaltern who had commanded the advance-guard from Richmond Road. Again it was his fortune to chaperon the Intelligence officer in a quest for information. It was a fifteen-mile ride to the nearest portion of the river, consequently it was late in the afternoon when the patrol entered the hilly tracts of country which covered the immediate approaches to the yellow stream. As the advance-guard of the party topped a little nek, they rode into a group of five Burghers. The British dragoons had the advantage, as the Burghers had only that moment emerged from the river, which they had crossed with the aid

of rafts manufactured from drift-wood and rushes. Not a shot was fired, and the men with evident signs of relief were glad to surrender the only two rifles remaining to them.

One of the most curious traits in the Burgher's character has always been displayed in the manner of his capitulation. He will always tell you that he is pleased to surrender, that it is an end that he has been longing and praying for for months, and yet until the actual moment which necessitates surrender he will strain every nerve to avoid capture, will suffer every privation and hardship, hunger, thirst, disease, and sickness, rather than walk the few miles which separate him from the British outposts. Now take the case of these men who were just captured: after a most harassing campaign, they had gone to the risk and pain of crossing a rapid river in full flood; having crossed at infinite peril, they welcomed the advent of the hostile patrol which deprived them of their liberty, and far from making expression of resentment, availed themselves of the opportunity to surrender, in an attitude which ill disguised their eagerness.

Moreover, they were loquacious. They had crossed the railway at Paauwpan with the

remnant of De Wet's fugitive commando. In the neighbourhood of Philipstown the guerilla had ordered a general break-up of the whole of his remaining commando. At certain points along the Orange River it was said that boats were hidden for the purpose of effecting a crossing. But this particular party, having been unable to find one of these boats, and having been shot at by various offshoots of pursuing columns, had effected the passage of the river in their own original way but to fall into the hands of the enemy. As far as De Wet and President Steyn were concerned, they professed to be able to speak with authority. Reduced to a single Cape-cart, they had determined to cross at Botha's Drift. Their crossing was to have been covered by a commando collected by Botmann at Philipolis, and they themselves, in common with all the dispersed Burghers, had orders to concentrate within four days at Philipolis, where supplies, horses, and ammunition would be awaiting them. All this, as it coincided with previous knowledge, was valuable information, and so, leaving a small escort to bring the prisoners along, the patrol hurried to make the return journey to Luckhoff.

(To be concluded.)

SPORT AND POLITICS UNDER AN EASTERN SKY.¹

"OH! the hills and the snow upon the hills. But what dost thou know of the hills?' said Kim's Lama. 'They are very close,' Kim said, and thrust open the door and looked at the long peaceful line of the Himalayas flushed in morning-gold." And who that has seen that sight from the door of his tent in the early morning of a hot day in the Indian spring—the green sugarsprouting in the near fields, the bare rice-swamps with their close-cut stubble eloquent of heat farther off, and more distant still the thirsty *jhil* in which a few months before he shot his fifty couple of snipe—can forget how he "snuffed the wind wistfully," and longed for the wings of a bird to flee away from the coming fury of an Indian June?

And when the fulness of time has come, when your first leave is granted; your baskets, covered with spotted deerskins, the spoil of your gun, are packed; your pet rifle cleaned and oiled; your servants—a good Moham-medan cook and a *bhisty* for choice — marshalled, and the start made, is there any joy that will ever come to you in after-life so keen as this, so unalloyed with anxieties, so unburdened with responsibilities? At last you will see those great

mountains face to face, you will make familiar friends of their steep sides, you will persuade them to let you pass and enter the unknown countries which they guard. Then there is the first camp on the summit of a great range 7000 feet above the sea. It is evening when you reach it—a small grassy slope beside the rocky bed of a little stream. Rhododendron-trees in full scarlet bloom around you. Below you the steep Himalayan *khud* descending to unimaginable depths—hidden by thick forests of mighty deodars. The murmur of the torrent down below is broken every now and then by the sharp snapping cry of the barking-deer. Across the valley another range rises as high as that on which you stand. As the low sun strikes it the rich colour of the rhododendrons blazes forth. But what is that above it? Your vision, dwarfed in its range by long use in the monotonous plains, has not thrown its glance high enough. That white background is not cloud. It is snow, eternal snow, glowing but not warmed with the light of the glorious sunset. Look up higher and still higher. There are the towers of snow from which the Sacred river draws its life. There is the great tent-like peak on which no man yet born can set his foot. You feel in-

¹ Sport and Politics under an Eastern Sky. By the Earl of Ronaldshay, F.R.G.S. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1902.

clined to throw yourself prostrate on the ground and worship the eternal hills. The enthusiasm which lit the faces of the pilgrims you passed yesterday becomes a thing to be understood. It is rapture this evening, to-morrow it will be awe. The next day's march is to be long and difficult. You must cross the next range and the next. The stars are still bright in the clear sky when you are up and drinking your early tea before you start. Soon there is a pale light in the east, and the great mountains, hitherto lost in the blue depths of the heavens, begin to wear a shape. Slowly from the east a rosy colour creeps over them, like the soft touch of a lover who would rouse his beloved from her sleep. First on the highest summits, then on the shoulders of the peaks — "rose-red with beatings in it" — steals the morning beam, until all at once, as the sun tops the mighty barrier of snow, the whole of the great white range bursts into life,

"With rosy colours leaping on the wall."

Thanks to Lord Ronaldshay and his fresh, unaffected narrative of sport in the great mountain-ranges which guard our Indian Empire on the north-east, we have tasted in imagination some of the joys of a first tour in the Himalayas. The great delight of a book of sport and travel like that before us belongs to those who have had some experience of the scenes described. To such we

can especially commend this book, as it will remind them of happy days. To others who wish to follow in the author's footsteps it will give much useful information and help in preparing for the task they are undertaking. We have had, and luckily for the nation still have, many adventurous young men who are eager for exploration as well as for sport. Time was when the sea drew the more eager spirits, when there was still a chance of sailing to new continents or unknown islands. Now if a man wants to discover new countries, and has no fancy for the polar regions, he must journey on land. There are still left "unconquered strongholds of Nature," as Lord Ronaldshay terms them; but even with a book like this to point the way, it is not given to all to have the bodily and mental fibre to invade them.

The author began his sporting journey from Srinagar. His objective was Baltistan. Very soon the difficulties of the journey were felt, and on the third day from his houseboat he was ploughing his way through newly melted snow. On the fourth day

"the going was frightful, as the snow was very deep and soft, and we soon left the coolies floundering about under their loads in a sorry plight; indeed so bad was it that it took them from early morning till late in the afternoon to accomplish a distance of only six or seven miles."

This was not an uncommon experience. On another day

"the going was bad, up and down steep hillsides, and the snow in places very treacherous, so much so that on one occasion I got into soft snow above my waist, and it took the two men I had with me all their time to haul me out again."

But even work like this has its compensations. "Having floundered through snow for a distance of over eighty miles, to be walking on solid hard ground again was quite delightful." Perhaps the inexperienced may imagine that a day like this would end happily in a comfortable inn, or at least a clean tent, with a warm fire and a fairly good dinner. But the only shelter to be had was a dirty mud hut, from which the inhabitants with their goats and cattle had to be removed, or on lucky days the comparative luxury of a post-runner's shanty, a small hut of wood or mud, with no other opening but a hole which does duty for a door.

Here is a description of the accommodation the traveller in these regions is glad to get:—

"The best room I could find consisted of four mud walls, a mud floor, and a wooden roof twelve feet in length by six feet in breadth and height. . . . There was no chimney, one window barely a foot square, and a door that one had to squeeze through half doubled up. The consequence was that I could not see across the room for smoke."

Seventeen days of arduous travelling brought the author to the Indus, and to the ibex ground beyond. Then the real work began. And, for the benefit of those who think

that a six hours' tramp over a moor or through turnips is hard work, we are tempted to quote a description of an ibex-hunter's day:—

"I rose at 2 A.M. and started before 3 A.M. We tramped along by the light of a brilliant moon, which gradually paled as it gave way to a still more brilliant day, with few stops till 8 A.M., when we sighted the ibex feeding slowly towards some rocky ground, where they would probably lie down for the day. . . . As there was no chance of stalking them where they were, we sat down to watch and see where they would settle, and I took the opportunity of having some cold breakfast. By twelve o'clock they seemed settled, and were lying scattered over a large stretch of rocky ground, sleeping. It was a difficult place to approach, as a huge open slope lay between them and us, over which we had to crawl in sight of the whole herd, making the most of what cover there was in the way of small bushes and inequalities in the ground. After much patient crawling, which was both exciting and painful, we got across the exposed hillside successfully, and crouched down on the skirts of the rocky ground where the herd was still peacefully lying. After a short rest for breath, we loaded the rifles and were beginning to crawl cautiously on, when there was a sudden and unexpected puff of wind from behind us. The result was immediate and exasperating, the whole herd, just out of shot, springing up and making quickly off in the opposite direction. I ran on in the hopes of cutting them off; but when I next saw them they were far above, gazing down in the direction of the unseen danger. Such are the trials of ibex-shooting; and it being nearly three o'clock, we were obliged to make our way back to camp, which we reached soon after six, having been going since two in the morning."

After a month or so in the ibex-ground of Baltistan, and

having reached as far north as Bisil in the same latitude as Gilgit, Lord Ronaldshay turned south again and made for Leh, which he reached on the 7th June. His amusing experiences of stalking sharpoo (*Ovis vignei*) with a hill raja, and of attempting a snow-slide without sufficient protection for his person, we commend to the reader. Ladak and Leh are pretty well-known ground by this time, and we need not loiter over them. After a few days at Leh, with some not very successful days after sharpoo, the author struck into the mountains south of the Indus and entered the wild and barren mountain-land towards the east,—a land wild and desolate, without a shrub to relieve the monotony. Here he spent arduous days in the pursuit of gazelle and the great wild sheep of Thibet. Sometimes "sick at continual bad luck," sometimes full of joy when fortune favoured him—always hard-working and persevering, his bag after three weeks were two *nyān* (Thibetan wild sheep), two *goa* (gazelles), and three burhel. Long days of climbing and stalking in high altitudes, where the rarefied air makes continual exertion almost impossible, bitter winds which skin the lips and nose and seem to cut you in two as you strive against them, freezing nights, bad enough between the blankets in your little tent, hard to endure when, as sometimes will happen, you have to lie in the open, fare of the

scantiest and rudest sort, cooked over a smoky and smouldering fire of sheep's dung—such is the life of the sportsman in Thibet. And the true sportsman will bear it with joy, sufficiently rewarded if once and again his luck is good, and he returns with a fine head or two of the splendid beasts he has been hunting. Lord Ronaldshay says,—

"Often, as I toiled over the huge burnt-up wastes which give the uplands of Tibet the appearance of a land forsaken and accursed, scorched by the burning noonday sun, chilled by the bitter blasts by night, fed on the unappetising productions of a Kashmiri cook, more unsavoury than ever since dung had become the only fuel obtainable, and, when sport was poor, the few tough sheep secured from the wandering Tartars the only source of staple food, I wondered wherein lay the extraordinary attraction which drew me willy-nilly from the comforts and luxuries of modern life to wander solitary over the dreary tracts of this forbidding land."

And many who have undergone similar experiences have wondered likewise. Is it, as Lord Ronaldshay asks, the unfettered freedom of the desert which stirs the instinct of the savage dormant in us? or is it some subtle fascination in the grand solitude of nature? or the hope "that springs eternal" that at any moment a beast worthy of any hardships may be stalked and shot? There may be something of all these motives. But binding together, and moving them all, is the superabundant energy of strong and vigorous youth, that will not suffer its possessor to spend

it in monotonous routine or inglorious ease.

The beginning of August saw Lord Ronaldshay north of the Indus, once more on his way to the great desolate wastes of Chang Chenmo and the towering heights of the Karakoram Mountains. His quarry now was the yák and the beautiful Thibetan antelope. The mountains grew more rugged, the altitudes higher, the cold more intense. This is a good description of night in a mountain camp:—

"I had not been asleep long when I was waked by loud peals of thunder and blinding flashes of lightning, while the rain came down like a waterspout and soaked the wretched little single-fly tent through in no time. It was bitterly cold too, and towards morning the rain turned to snow, so that when at last I ventured to crawl out of my blankets nothing but vast stretches of dazzling whiteness were to be seen in every direction."

By the middle of October the author was back in Srinagar, and after a short rest and taste of civilisation he was off again northward by the Boorzil Pass to try his luck with markhor. This was an arduous journey to undertake in winter, and no one but a keen sportsman would have ventured on it for pleasure. And of what kind was the pleasure?—

"Of all known animals that lure the sportsman on in their pursuit, surely none affect such truly appalling ground as do the spiral-horned markhor."

The ground he dwells in is

"in every way worthy of him, and

there is no use whatsoever in thinking of embarking on a markhor-hunt if one is not prepared to take one's life in one's hand, and, trusting to a good head and a tenacious pair of feet, to go boldly across ground that often would appear to afford foothold for nothing bigger than an insect."

One of Lord Ronalds'say's friends, "a splendid climber, and as hardy an individual as one could meet with anywhere," told him that even he, accustomed as he was to the life, felt the effect on his nerves after a succession of days spent in pursuit of the markhor. But then he added, "Who ever would go on to ground of that sort if there was not the temptation of a pair of magnificent horns in front of him?" Perhaps there are people who would go quicker if the pair of horns was behind them. Then there is, besides the danger,—and what really attractive sport is without its share of danger?—

"the sublime grandeur of the scenery amid which it is carried out, the hard healthy life, the nights in the open with nothing between oneself and the glorious starlit heavens, in some hollow far up in the mysterious mountains, . . . the wild excitement which pulses through one's being as one surmounts one after another the obstacles which separate one from the object of one's pursuit, the keen feeling of exhilaration which sweeps over one at a successful shot."

These reasons lead Earl Ronaldshay to decide that "hunting markhor is a pastime which, if not unequalled, is at any rate unsurpassed by any other."

We cannot spare time to follow the author's adventures in



this wild and exciting sport, but we commend them to the reader. Nor can we follow his steps as he made his way back over the paths of avalanches in the depth of winter from Boonji to Srinagar, where he returned once more to civilised life. Before leaving him, however, we would dedicate a few words of praise to the Indian servants and coolies who render such a tour as this possible to the English sportsman. Where else can you get servants, like Lord Ronaldshay's Khuda Bux and Ram Pershad, who will turn up cheerfully at the end of a ten hours' march over appalling ground and in fearful weather and cook you a dinner which, if it does not exactly tickle the palate, will keep you from starving? And the brave patient coolies who toil along through snow and over precipice for a trifle of fourpence a-day or twopence and their food! All honour is due to them for their faithful services: their perseverance in difficulty, their endurance through long hours of darkness and storm, their loyalty in struggling against every obstacle and danger, death threatening them sometimes at every step. If they failed us we should be left helpless on the mountain side. At the end of the march they take their pence and toil wearily back to the wretched hovels which are their homes. We see their faces no more, and hardly give them another thought. They are good men and true. Let us hope that in the next stage

of their existence they may live in happier hunting-grounds and have more of the pleasure and less of the toil of the chase.

It is time now to turn to the more serious part of Lord Ronaldshay's book, in which he describes his journey through Beluchistan to Seistan and thence to the Caspian. After the elaborate work of Lord Curzon on Persia, little remains for the more superficial traveller to teach us regarding that country. Nor has it been left to Lord Ronaldshay to discover the nature of the ground between Quetta and the boundary of Seistan. Although much may not have been published concerning it, the route, we may be sure, was carefully examined and probably surveyed when the Indian Government began to direct its attention to the development of trade by that channel. We have no wish, however, to disparage the author's labours in this field, or to deny the usefulness of his description as a contribution towards the solution of a difficult political problem.

Public attention has been drawn for some months past to what is known as the Quetta-Nushki route. Quetta is well known as the great outpost of our Indian defences on the western frontier, and as the practical terminus of the Sind-Bolan branch of the North-Western Railway of India. Connected by that line with the port of Karachi and with all the large garrisons of Nor-

thern India, it is essentially a *place d'armes* from which the movements of any enemy from the west can be watched. Beyond Quetta the rails run over the plateau and under the Khoja Amran range to Chaman on the frontier of Afghanistan, well on the way to Kandahar, and ready when the time comes for an advance to that city. But owing to causes, some of which might perhaps have been avoided, Abdul Rahman looked upon the extension to Chaman with disfavour, and succeeded in boycotting the line. There is no likelihood at present of any Afghan Government consenting to allow us to lay down the rails to Kandahar, which is the direction in which an extension would be naturally expected. Heretofore a Russian invasion has been anticipated by the Herat-Kandahar route; and Herat has been held to be the key of India. Writing in 1875, before the occupation of Merv by the Russians, Sir Henry Rawlinson thought that the Russian advance to Merv ought to be the signal for our occupation of Herat, which city, he wrote, "is both strategically and politically an indispensable bulwark of India, and we cannot and will not allow its future fate to be at the disposition of a foreign Power."

Events have marched quickly and far since those words were written, and now we have to face the fact that Russia is established on the Kushk, connected by rail with her base on the Caspian and within easy striking distance of Herat. At

the same time it has been found impossible, owing to the opposition of the Amir, to improve our own communications so as to enable us to anticipate or meet a blow at that place. These circumstances may have had some share in turning the attention of Indian politicians to the Beluchistan route, which passes through a country entirely under our own control. If action in the Kandahar-Herat direction is barred, something may be done on the Quetta-Seistan line, and to do is better than to sit still.

This is the view taken apparently by the Government of India, for it has been announced that sanction has been given to the Quetta-Nushki line, and it is understood that the work of construction is already well advanced. The distance from Quetta to Nushki is only eighty miles, out of a total of nearly 500 to the Seistan frontier. But this is the most difficult section of the route from an engineer's point of view. Even if the line were to end there, it would greatly facilitate travelling, inasmuch as Nushki is a much more convenient place for a camel caravan to start from than Quetta, as Lord Ronaldshay is careful to point out. Thence to Robat, the last station in our territory, the country is little better than a desert, but it presents no engineering difficulties except the scarcity of water, which may be overcome.

Avowedly, of course, the Government of India have nothing in their minds except

the interests of trade, and the advantage of drawing into closer commercial relations with Persia. Every one knows that there is very little trade. The author says that the value of the total trade over this route in 1900-01 was £102,000. The cost of the line between Quetta and Nushki, eighty miles, with steep gradients and tunnels, cannot be much less than £15,000 per mile. Financial considerations alone would hardly suffice to justify such an outlay. When in addition to this it is remembered that the author of 'Persia,' who gave so much space to the Seistan question and strongly advocated the Nushki-Seistan line, is the present Viceroy of India, we can hardly wonder that writers in the Russian press should regard the move as dictated by political and strategic reasons. In fact, the whole of the great question of the position of Persia in Asiatic politics is opened up by the commencement of these few miles of railway in a remote desert. It is time that it was opened up and made intelligible to the British electors. "Turkestan, Afghanistan, Transcaspia, Persia," wrote George N. Curzon in 1892—"to many these names breathe only a sense of utter remoteness or a memory of strange vicissitudes and of moribund romance. To me I confess they are the pieces on a chessboard upon which is being played out a game for

the dominion of the world." Well, Quetta to Nushki is Lord Curzon's move. What will be the answer? That it will be left unanswered by the other player is improbable.

There are two possibilities which render Persia of paramount importance to us. If a hostile Power were established in Persia and had designs on India, it would be in a very strong position for organising an invasion of that country. If, without any immediate intention of attacking India, it were to possess itself of a port in the Persian Gulf or the Indian Ocean, the danger to our commerce with the East and to our communications with India would be enormous. This is not merely the opinion of English or Anglo-Indian Russophobes. The invasion of India by land from Persia was, as the reader will remember, proposed by Napoleon Bonaparte to the Emperor Alexander at Tilsit. It was hardly practicable, perhaps, at that time. But the lapse of a century has seen the Russians firmly established in North-Eastern Persia, and with their hands on Herat. The French are again in alliance with them, and are in a position, if not to threaten, yet certainly to annoy, us on the other side of our Indian Empire.¹

As to the danger of allowing a foreign Power to establish a naval station in the Persian Gulf there can hardly be two opinions at the present time.

¹ See "British Interests in Siam," Blackwood's Magazine, February 1902.

It is true that Sir H. Rawlinson thought little of it. A hundred years ago Captain Malcolm was urging the necessity of preventing the French from establishing themselves on the shores of the gulf. Some seventy years later the question revived with reference to the Russians. "By a certain class," wrote Rawlinson, "of political writers the present designs of Russia upon Persia, and her apparent anxiety to push forward railways into the interior, are supposed to aim especially at the acquisition of a port in the Persian Gulf as a convenient means of access at all times to the Indian seas, and with a view to contesting in the far future our maritime supremacy in the East." He proceeds to argue that there is no region in the world less favourable to the development of naval power than the shores of the Persian Gulf; and asserts that, in order to effect a settlement on the shores of the gulf, Russia would have in the first instance "to absorb the eastern portion of Asiatic Turkey, and either colonise or at any rate occupy the rich alluvial valley of the Tigris and Euphrates." That is not the opinion of the great sailor politician Captain Mahan, who in a recent paper warning England against the danger of allowing a foreign Power to establish itself in the gulf writes, "Russia on the Persian Gulf would be a perpetual menace of war." Nor does it appear necessary, in view of Russia's present position in Persia, that she should first

occupy the valley of the Tigris. One road to the Indian Ocean would lie through Seistan. We hope we may assume with Mr Curzon, writing in 1892, "that a Russian port upon the Persian Gulf or Indian Ocean would no more be tolerated by any English Minister or Government than would an English port on the Caspian by any Czar."

The construction of a railway from Quetta to the Seistan frontier may be considered as a measure of defence against both dangers which threaten us from the establishment of the Russians in Persia. It is a very serious and difficult problem. To be of any use the railway must be accompanied by an extension of our military garrisons in sufficient force along the line to secure its safety and at the Persian end to guard it against seizure, otherwise it will prove the means not of repelling but of assisting invasion. Although the passage of an invading army by the Beluchistan route might be in some respects and under some conditions less difficult than the route by Herat and Kandahar, it could not be accomplished in the absence of a railway without great preparations and a very large camel transport that would take a considerable time to collect. The real and perhaps the only effectual method of stopping the Russians in their advance through Persia is a firm attitude of opposition on the part of the British Government. It is all very well to allow or to encourage the

Government of India to undertake such subsidiary measures, —measures which may be helpful, or even necessary, on their own responsibility and at the cost of the Indian taxpayer. But this will not be enough unless behind it all there is a fixed determination on the part of England to meet the first movements of Russia by war, and unless the Czar's advisers are convinced that she means so to meet them.

We trust that his Majesty's Ministers have carefully thought out the future conduct of the game, and are well advised as to the course to be pursued. The Persian question is one that cannot be ignored. As Sir H. Rawlinson observed in

1875, "There is no political question connected with our Indian Empire which has been treated more frequently, or with greater discrepancy of result." Yet, owing to her geographical position, British interests in Persia have remained, and must remain, substantially the same. It is to be feared that for a long time they have been neglected, until our influence has waned before that of our enemy. Unfortunately no help can be expected from Persia herself. She is in the position of a man whose adversary has gripped him by the throat. The friend who wishes to save him cannot do much good by pulling him by the feet.

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXLV.

NOVEMBER 1902.

VOL. CLXXII.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER I.—OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA.

THERE was a woman years ago in Uist who had two sons, one to her first husband, one to his successor. They dwelt in Corodale. That place, remote and little, is like the enormous world and life itself—a mingling of meaningless hills and hollows, suffering the fury of eternal seas incomprehensible; to-night, it may be, wet with tears, to-morrow smiled on by the most jovial sun, and once, though now forlorn, it was exceeding busy with betrothals and bridals and births and blythe-meats, and burials in Lamasay yard, strife among the folks of it as well as great love. Two mountains stand behind the house where dwelt the widow and her sons—Hecla and Benmore the names of them; close beside in Usinish Glen is a lake so blue that no other water in the Long Isle can compare with it for loveliness. A prince well known in story fled here once from his enemies and hid him in a cave. He came out on a morning, as they say, and looked all around him at a wild wan sea and a dripping land, crossed himself, and "*Mon dieu!*" said he; "how dolorous!" and shivered, poor lad! in his plaid, and looked

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again at the mist on Hecla, and hearkened, all abashed and all uneasy, to the roll of waves in the creek of the Virgin Mary, the splash of breakers on the rocks of Hellisdale. "What a place for a right tragedy," said he, "if here were people capable of a passion!" Beside him as he spoke was a huge, dark, silent man who understood, and smiled to himself, but said nothing to his prince, for whose poor cause a twelvemonth later he was doomed to die. He was father to her that lived in Corodale. In this man's mind there slept a score of wild tales about the place the prince was looking on; from his own loins was yet to come a story of passion to make Corodale memorable for many generations. I walked in Uist yesterday, on what were once this dark man's acres; I found Usinish silent, except for the belling of red deer. Corodale House was gone completely but for the lintels jutting out among the nettles. I cried, with half a hope of something to be manifested — what, I knew not — "Duncan! Duncan!" among the bushes one time coaxed to make a Hebridean garden for Anna, the girl of fortune, but there was no answer. Duncan is departed, and the girl that loved him; and gone too is Col the brave and wicked: there has been no dance in Corodale for two generations. Still the crash of seas, and Corodale Loch in sunshine blue as an angel's eye: still the mountains, but never again the men! Love and avarice, that

sought the Treasure of MacNeil, blazed high and furious (it seemed), but brief like fires on autumn moors, and all that is left is this tale of the widow's sons, sometimes yet to be heard in the shealings, the matter of a song chanted by the fishermen of the Outer Isles.

Not in the neighbourhood of Corodale itself, but on the other side of the island, upon a rock that rose above the sandy macharland, a church-bell rang one morning in September. The scream of sea-fowl and the sound of waters mingled with the summons to Mass in Our Lady Star of the Sea. A high wind blew. The bay was full of idle boats. No shuttle clacked in the looms of the little black town-land houses. From all sides came the people for the Mass of this St Michael's Day, clambering up the narrow paths to the church upon the rock. The men were all fishers or tillers of the grudging soil, built large, blue-eyed, slow; the women, almost without exception, wore the gaudiest of plaids and kerchiefs, stepped like hinds, subdued their roving glances from a sense of the decorum due to the occasion, and yet in every roll of the haunches, every gesture, gave a hint of fires.

A porringer half full of holy water, brown from some mossy well, stood in a nook at the entrance: they dipped their fingers in it, muttering some invocation, and entered a sanctuary where the odour of peat and new-baked bread was in-

cense, and knelt to their Gaelic *aves*. All in this chapel of Stella Maris had with them the St Michael's cake — the Michael morning food, seven cornered for the seven mysteries, and later these were blessed by Father Ludovick. Throughout that peaceful service in the church upon the hill the sound of the quarrelsome sea intruded. Within was calm, one common heart in harmony subdued before the Mystery; outside in the world warred the unregenerate elements, winds unelect by Heaven blustering from Hecla and Benmore, waves thrashing on the little isle of Oronsay and striving among the skiffs.

There was one in that congregation who thought of this in the intervals of her priest-brother's exhortations to his people to praise Michael for his guidance and God for His bounty of corn and fruit. She sat in the front of the church, close up on the altar, a figure for daintiness and dress wholly foreign in that assemblage of tartan plaids and kerchiefs, running the beads of her rosary through fingers white as milk and fine as satin, though she was now her brother Ludovick's housekeeper, spinner, darning, baker, and cook. Now and again his glance would fall upon her upturned and abstracted face, and never without a momentary glow of keen affection. He loved his people; but still — but still the very core of his regard was for Little Anna, who was little in their language only because her brother was uncommon tall.

To her alone perhaps of all the congregation came some secular influence with the invading sound of wind and sea; bringing a thought of the wide, noisy, battling, restless world whereof these Outer Isles are but a wind-blown fringe. A Michaelmas in another land was recalled; she heard the morning carol of the birds in the garden of St Teresa; Sister Agnes took her through the streets of Paris again, and the clamour of the pavements, the cries about the booths, were like the throb and beat of seas in the land of her heredity. A wistfulness was manifest in her face; she, that ordinarily thought in English or the mother tongue, now thought in French of idle worldly things remote from this high Stella Maris on the rock, filled with humble folks prostrate in their faith, redolent of peats and new-baked morning bread of good St Michael, Neptune of the Gael, patron saint of boats and horses.

I fear she heard the chimes of Notre Dame above the tinkling bell that marked the *sanctus, sanctus, sanctus* of the Preface; at the chanting of her brother there came to her the air of a careless song heard on the packet from Calais, when a mariner stood out upon the bows, strong figure of eternal quest and hope, looking for land, and her spirit was all agog for new experiences.

And then the Mass was over, the people went forth eagerly with their cakes into the windy world of vacant spaces, of peat-stacks, promontories, dead and

crumbling castles, ancient huts of lichen stone that seemed a part of nature, so much in harmony were they with nooks of earth they sheltered in; along the stony footpaths; by the verge of perilous cliffs. On the outer rocks Atlantic burst with thunder or retched through the three Sounds eastward; Hecla and Benmore smoked with mist about their bases. A bleak land it might seem to them that have no inward fires, and yet a land most brave, often most beautiful, acceptable to God, and edifying extremely. On the edge of Kinavreck a piper stood who knew it so, and threw his instrument into his arm, and, full of pride and happiness, charmed the uproarious sea with mountain songs.

Father Ludovick took his sister's hand unconsciously in his as he came out of the church a little behind his people, and they walked together towards the presbytery house that sheltered to the south of Stella Maris. They were, perhaps, the only ones in all the congregation to speak English, though it was not their mother nor their favourite tongue.

"Anna," said he, reflecting, "I think every priest should have a sister. Only one; two would be for any sober cleric's detriment."

"Why?" said she, smiling at his limitation, as she looked up into his face.

He glanced vaguely after his dispersing people hurrying with the Michaelmas cakes to the poor, at the contending sea, at

the menace of the horizon. He was a man about thirty-five years old, tall and spare, beloved of his folk, who called him playfully behind his back "Lord of the Isles," half for his mother's name, that had been Macdonald, half for his attributes of lovable wise command. A king in some respects, and yet a child in his simplicities.

"Why?" asked his sister Anna again, the wind in her hair, the blue of the sea in her eyes.

"It brings him nearer to the world," said Father Ludovick. "God bless the Long Isle! God bless my dear own people! their very follies make me fonder of them. And yet—*mochree*!—they are somehow, sometimes, so far from me that I need a little sinful sister to make my love for human nature something more than a spiritual regard for the universal."

"Indeed, and thank you, Father Ludovick, for the 'sinful,'" said Anna, and stopped to drop a curtsy. "What a mercy I came back from France to keep my brother from taking wings and flying!"

"But I wish the sister would not smile to herself when she should be deep in her devotions. It disconcerts her brother the priest."

"I thought of Paris just for some moments," said she contritely.

"I know, I know," said Father Ludovick, "and I, poor dust!—infected through a worldly eye and a Paris cap, thought at the same moment of Valladolid. I heard the wind in its steeples. It was

the smell of new-baked cakes, perhaps, as much as my sister Anna's eyes. Valladolid and the guitar—Heaven help me!—and morning in a wayside wine-shop at breakfast. How glad we should be to have escaped the world with all its distractions, and find peace here and the simple way!”

“Yes,” said Anna, yet not with heartiness. She loved the Isles for reasons less austere. Her brother did not notice the absence of enthusiasm. With a bent head now, and hands clasped behind his back, he picked his way over the rough path that led to his home. “I heard the sound of the sea come in yonder,” he went on, “and it seemed the threat of the outer world far away from these little islands, and we so snug and safe here, with not even a lover to steal away my sister.”

“Y—yes,” said Anna, even less heartily than before. So much less heartily that her brother looked up, awakened from his reverie, caught a fleeting glimpse of some suppressed amusement. He laughed softly, and pinched her slightly on a finger.

“Well, at least, he has not come yet,” said he.

“There is no hurry, I declare to you,” said Anna. “Why should we talk nonsense?”

“Because we are the children of men,” said Father Ludovick. He stopped, and drew her up beside him, and looked at her, dashed on with smiles and sun; at her wind-blown hair, her ardent open lips, her head upheld in a playful arrogance.

“Ah, it will come, it will come!” he said regretfully, and pushed her from him lovably. “The world is not so blind; God the good Artist does not throw away His finest masterpiece upon a desolate rock. And when it comes——”

“It will be for MacNeil's Treasure, and never for my heart,” said Anna. “I declare the existence of the wretched gold will make me suspect a fairy prince's wooing.”

“It must be for the pure love of the sweetest girl in all broad Albyn!” cried he; “and MacNeil's Treasure will be none of her attractions.”

“The good folk of Uist, all the same, make much of my fifty-year fortune,” said Anna.

“They will not envy you it, at all events, or I misjudge the folks of Uist.”

“Oh no, they do not envy me; they would not do that, I feel sure, if it was blessed instead of cursed. But I am hearing of it constantly in the huts——”

Father Ludovick gave an impatient cry. “In spite of what I tell them!” said he. “I will not have it! I have told them neither you nor I shall handle this cursed Loch Arkaig treasure. They know that I loathe the very mention of it, because I know its story better perhaps than any man that lives, though maybe there are scores whose purgatory is the more frightful for their new knowledge of how much that devil's dross misled them. What a thought that men—otherwise, maybe, fit for paradise—should tenant hell eter-

nally because some metal, whose glitter they never saw, lay tarnishing under a rock in—in——” He checked himself, and reddened. Anna looked up at him, surprised.

“In where?” she asked curiously. “I thought you could not know.”

“Nor do I,” said the priest hastily. “I have no idea where this wretched *ulaidh* is now, and I wish our uncle had never made it known that he had passed the secret on to you. We are agreed, you and I, Anna, that though, to please an old man dying, you may listen, it would be the greatest of errors to try to benefit you by this cursed bequest.”

“That is very well, but still I think the Church——”

“The Church!” He raised his arms with an impatient gesture. “Say no more of that; the Church could never touch it, except perhaps to sink it in the deeps of Barra Sound. *Dhe!* I would not risk it even there, for fear our cod and halibut should perish of yellow pest, and our herring come to table with eternal gut-poke for the fever of avarice.”

“*Peccavi! peccavi!* I confess, Master Priest, to a small deception just now,” said Anna, smiling again. “When I said the Church I meant just a new tower, of the littlest, of the cheapest, for Stella Maris, and perhaps a bottle of Spanish wine more frequently for Father Ludovick——”

“For his visitors it might perhaps be welcome, this extra flagon; myself, I have wine enough in my soul—faith! the

juice itself of sun and tempest; carouse on fancies, and walk, when I will, uplifted on the mists of Hecla and Benmore. I own the Isles from Barra Head to the very Butt of Lewis so far as I can ride or sail a skiff; the sea is mine to the dip of it, and all the winds come neighbourly to my door; would I change for a display of brick and mortar, and a bottle, the mood that makes me free of all, and one and equal with the universe? The first that mentions your name together with Loch Arkaig’s trash—by God! I’ll bring him to his bended knees! It was gathered in folly; it was buried in disgrace. Men have lied for it and died for it, and have lain awake at night to think on it when they might in dreams be happier than kings.”

“But still,” said Anna,—though this was more to herself than to him,—“but still I think it would be fine to have a new tower for the dear church, and the extra bottle of Spanish wine!”

They had reached the door of the presbytery house; they entered together.

There was a shiver of autumn coldness in the air; the horizon was broken by a long cloud that looked like a mountain new born in the deep; far off on the flats of Heiskar there was the froth of billows.

And all along the pathways of the island sped the people, hurrying home to break their cakes and divide the ceremonial lamb. Some of them whose dwellings were nearer the church had done so already,

and were running with bee-skep baskets round the poorer huts of the nearer town-land, giving, as custom compelled, and their own good hearts in any case had prompted, something of their own thin opulence in St Michael's morning food to the less fortunate of their fellows. Uist the windy complained in tussock and dune, and still gallant above the wind was the sound of young folks' merriment, of children laughing and crying to each other in the fields where they kept the cattle from the unfenced corn, of girls singing innumerable in the spirit of holiday, as, waist-encircled in each other's arms, they walked in groups to outer townships round the bays. A pleasant chatter of voices was carried on the wind, through it, and over all the piper upon Kinavreck giving himself wholly to the wonder of the day, the spirit of the season, breathing his immortal soul into the sheepskin and telling the grumbling sea.

Later in the day there rose a new sound—the thud of galloping hoofs, the whinnying of island ponies bearing the folks to another Michaelmas ceremony. They came from every part of the macharland, men and women and children; Father Ludovick led them to the graveyard first for prayers for all the stout old forefathers, and then to the scene of games. On the great white strand they played. There was running on foot and galloping on horseback; the ambitious contended eagerly for trivial prizes; couples, more wisely gauging the value of all this world can give, sought

sandy little dells among the dunes, and there unseen made love with the vigour of the wind, the depth, the passion of the sea. A most merry wholesome world, and frank and simple! Anna flashed, a sunbeam, here and there among them; her brother, the priest, had children tugging at his knees and their mothers crying ironic pleasantries to him. He, too, felt tipsy with the wind-wine of Uist, felt in tune with the everlasting rhythm of all the swinging worlds. So busy were the white sands of the bay that it looked as if all the isle were here.

All but one man.

The day was growing late when he came—this fellow—along the road from Corodale, and climbed to the back of the church of Stella Maris by a rocky path. He was tall, black, broad-shouldered, curled and bearded like a Spaniard, exceedingly neat in dress. When he reached the top of the rock at the church gable, he threw a glance to sea, sweeping the farthest line of it like an eager mariner on a raft, then turned his glance with disappointment to the Sound. There was nothing to see there but a tiny lug-sail boat that had rounded Kintra of the Holy Cross, and beat clumsily against dark squalls and a rising tide.

He stood black and tall, and bitterly vexed, it seemed, biting his beard. And then his glance fell on the populace at their games.

“St Michael's Day!” he said aloud in his own language. “I wondered where the folks had

gone, and left their fields so lonely and their doors without a word of welcome. O king! are we not the forgetful folks in Corodale? Had I come here earlier I should have run my head into a Mass. I come to look for a sloop, and find myself at an *oda*. Well, here's no sloop on the blue, and my skipper is two days late in Arisaig, or met last night's storm and is now at the end of days and all seafaring, with weeds in his teeth, somewhere under the Minch. I have no luck, devil the bit of it! what else could I look for when I rose on my wrong side this morning, and had mother cry me back in Corodale yesterday?"

He turned on his heel to go down from the rock the way he had mounted, when the open door of the church seemed to call him in. He hesitated for a little, bit his beard again, then challenged his resolution, went in with his cap in his hand, and awkwardly dipped a finger in the porringer. The bowl, perched precariously in its nook, toppled and fell on the floor, breaking in fragments, and splashing his boots with the holy water.

"God be about us!" said he, turning quickly from the unlucky omen. His going had been delayed but a few moments, yet they made twelve months' difference to the man in the lug-sail boat, who was buffeted in the Sound where the black squalls chased each other. For what to him upon the rock was to be the last glance out to sea showed the lug-sail shake a moment, then belly suddenly, then the skiff upset and sink.

No one saw it but himself: the lovers busy in the dells, the dancers on the sand, the foot-runners striving on the beach, —all the merry, careless populace missed the spectacle. He gave a shout that rang vastly in the wind, plunged down the rocky path before the church, ran towards the cove where the idle skiffs were tossing. "To sea! to sea! 'illean!" he cried over and over again; and the people looked amazed at him tearing to their skiffs. They were ignorant of the tragedy; they could not guess a reason for his conduct. "'Twas ever the way with Uist at the dancing," he thought angrily; "their eyes in their insteps;" and reached the wall where the skiffs were ranged, and leaped on the nearest, and slashed with a knife till the bow was free, and threw out with one enormous heave of his arms the big brown sail, and steered in chase of a helpless figure clinging to a fishing bladder, driven before the squalls to Kintra of the Holy Cross.

He was an elderly man that grasped the bladder, with a slack foolish mouth in which the rude seas plopped, exceedingly salt and smelling of weeds. To his senses the bladder seemed no bigger than a pebble and no more buoyant as he turned and rolled in the waves. Of windy Uist he could see no speck; but when at intervals upon a crest he opened brine-blurred eyes, he saw the shabby tower of Our Lady Star of the Sea standing miraculously among the waves that swept conquering over the bulging world. His ears were

full of roarings, his mind fumbled confusedly over the beginnings of many prayers. Mountains seemed weighed on his feet; his fingers seemed to sweat a grease, and slipped in spite of him from the wood of the bladder; and he sank, and he sank, and he sank, till he hung over the edge of the universe, above the emptiness that is under all things, sea or land.

Down upon him swept the skiff, with the dark man calling, the tiller hot in his armpit, the sheets of the sail shrieking under his heel; her bow went round into the wind, her canvas flapping, her bows,

annoyed, objecting to the check. The dark man saw a hand, drew free the halyard, let down his sail, and dived.

Before the wind, tossed like the bladder or the skiff ahead of them, the two men drifted towards Kintra of the Holy Cross.

And then night fell on windy Uist; the curlews cried; night and storm. The wind raved, and the rain slanted over the land. But still were people passing along the road and footpaths; lights shone over all the country. Michaelmas Day was done, and now had come the hour of song and story.

CHAPTER II.—IN THE BLACK HOUSES.

A custom of all lonely simple races brings the folk together at night to *ceilidh* (as they call their evening gossips) in these Outer Isles. Storms will not prevent them; storms, indeed, but make these evening entertainments sweeter when the merry groups meet in the larger houses of the townships to sit about the central fires of peat. Tales antique and heroic, of Fingal the brave and Ossian the plucker of harps, are told; songs of sea and pasture-land, and short love and long war, are sung; guesses are put, and repartee abounds. Sometimes, too, a gifted man will fill a sheepskin with a gush of pride and squeeze the most marvellous tunes from reeds and drones, expressing, to all who have the ears to hear, the ecstasy that lies in remem-

brance and regret, till the folks lean forward on their seats, and with blood-red faces look into peat-flame and the ember, something with no words for its description, something old and sweetly melancholy and unrecoverable stirring them to tears. Up in the lofts, peeping between the jetty cabars—the peat-stained joists—will lie the children, marvelling, and all eyes and ears, drinking song and tale and pipe-tune thirstily, terrified for the dark spaces of the roof above and behind them when the story is of ghost and sad presentiment, and laughing heartily and uncontrolled when other humours inform the entertainment. The men pleat quicken tethers for the cattle, or twine tough heather into ropes to bind the thatch for

the roofs of their houses; the women knit, sew, card, and spin. So have they done for generations beyond number, carrying on through centuries by word of mouth the poems, the histories of the Gael.

It was at such a gathering in the township of Dalvoolin, round Kintra of the Holy Cross, the dark man, who looked Spanish because of his curled short beard, found himself that self-same night he had saved an elderly wretch from drowning. He was one that ever loved an entertainment—if it cost him nothing—and felt it good to bask in the praise the Islands of the west will ever accord to a hero.

They called him Young Corodale at the outset, for the name of his family's small estate on the other side of the island: the night passed quickly, but if quick passed the night quicker passed their shyness, and soon they were calling him by his Christian name of Col. For he was one who stood on no ceremony, and liked the brevity of his own name because it came so pat to the lips of all good fellows. There was no flattery too coarse for him of the Spanish beard. In the spaces between song or tale 'twas "*Oh 'ille!* what courage! In the black squall, too, and for Dark John, an old man without woman or child or a penny of land of his own, who must die soon anyway."

"Amn't I telling the same Dark John that death has surely forgotten him?" said an unkindly spinster woman, drag-

ging rebellious wool through her carding-combs.

"But a trifle, but a trifle, good folks!" said the affable man from Corodale. "I have swam ere now as a lad round Oronsay, and to bear this man you call Dark John round the point of Kintra was like bearing a sack of sticks."

"Now that we have dried you, we must wet you, hero," said the man of the house, proffering a glass. "Have that, Master Col, and stretch your hand for another; it is not every day, worse luck! a man is on the edge of drowning, and a gallant at hand to save him in windy Uist. Drink, and stretch again your hand."

And Col most cheerfully stretched his hand. It cost nothing.

"It is not lucky to save a man from drowning: take its spoil from the sea and the spoil itself will punish you," said the grumbling woman at the carding-combs. "There would have been a lament and a keening at Boisdale to-morrow, sure, but for this strong gentleman, and I have not had the fortune to hear a dirge for a twelve-month."

"Daughter of him I'll mention not! Do you grudge Dark John his life?" cried the man of the house impatiently, and at that the boys in the loft began to laugh, so up with a scourge of broom to the loft climbed their mother. They ran like mice to their bed, but she was after them, and her switching could be heard below.

"It was not I, mother, not

I," cried one of the boys, whimpering carefully.

"Well, never mind; take yon for the sake of company; it will like enough be you on the next occasion. Oh, Mary Mother, what a heart-break are the children of this island!" And down she came, smiling, stout, and panting, no sooner to be seated at her hearth than the faces of the children were at the mouth of the loft again.

Col of the Spanish beard and the trim clothing had an eye that found the very core of whoever he looked at, rendering the shy or the scarce honest uneasy at his glance. He would seem a man to be adored by man- or woman-kind, so fine in his gestures, so free and bold and ringing in his voice. But the goodwife sitting at his side had his beard between her and the light of a crusie that hung from a rafter, and she must be staring every now and then through it at the mouth below betraying another character. She had started by admiring, she grew like a woman, on the mere aspect of things concealed, to dislike, and her chastisement of her children had been meant in a roundabout way as relief for her feelings.

"Stretch your hand, Master Col," invited the master of the house. She gave him a grimace disapproving, and made to end this adulation.

"Perhaps," said she, "our piper will play another tune?"

"The piper has gone over for a little to Geepie's dwelling," said the husband, "but his pipes are here."

"Poor is the bagpipe that is

widowed," said she, and could not keep her eyes off the mouth that to all but her was hid below the Spanish beard. Col saw her look: he turned on her his disconcerting eyes; but for once they had no power, because the woman had seen his mouth. "There, or I'm wrong, is the daughter of a bitch!" he thought, for no other reason than that she faced him unabashed.

And then a loud knocking came to the door, setting the hearts of the bairns in the loft thundering in their bosoms. Even the elder company seemed alarmed. It was not on Michaelmas night there should be rapping at any door in hospitable Uist.

"Christ's Cross be on us!" whispered the girls. A hollow silence held the house all trembling in its hand; outside there was the drip of the thatch eaves, the old search and pity of the wind, but they heard not these, nor the threat of ocean that is ever in the air of the Outer Isles.

"Who knocks?" cried the goodman at last, and manoeuvred to get his wife between him and the door.

"Hail to the house and the household! For the love of Mary will any one give me a place here to lay my head?" cried a voice they all knew, and none better than Col, who had heard the despairing shriek of it as he dived for the man who had lost his hold of the fishing-bladder and was slipping for the last time into the deeps of Barra Sound.

The company laughed, their minds relieved.

"And where would you lay your feet, honest person? Outside to trip the neighbours?" asked the goodwife. She opened the door, and gave entrance to the old man with the slack foolish mouth. "I thought they had dried you, and wet you, and put you long ago to your naked bed?"

"I was there indeed," said the man who entered, blinking with eyes inflamed by the deeper brine, "but wakened and had a strong command in me to seek for the hero that saved me, and in the dark I have lost my way."

"Faith! and in the dark, then, you have had a lover's good fortune and have found your hero," said the goodman, "for here he is."

"Let me put my two eyes on him," cried Dark John. He peered about the assemblage, plainly a whimsical natural character, long and thin and sea-sodden till his skin was all in furrows, scarcely worth saving from the fish he had himself so long preyed on. When he saw the gentleman from Corodale, he made a loutish bow. "There he is to you!" cried he, loud and elated. "Master; I could not sleep without coming again to thank you. For more than an hour, *mo chreach!* have I looked for you, and here my fortune brings me to your feet. I dreamt I was in the deep again and the net-bow gone, and the sting of the salt in my nostrils. I wakened with the water glucking at my

throat, and felt I must come and make my reverence to the hero that saved me."

"You thanked me enough before, just man," said Corodale, but still was manifestly pleased. "How happens it that a decent man of Uist was fishing alone on Michaelmas Day?"

"It is not a day of Obligation," answered the old man. "I have a wonderful memory for minding things; but of the feast days and the fast days of Isle Uist I am for ever forgetting, being a lonely man without woman or child to keep me to the bit. The truth, O king of the moon and sun and the beautiful sublime stars! is, that I forgot what day this was."

The young folks laughed at his eloquence; the goodwife filled him out a little glass with a foot on it, for the footless glass of the hero with a will is not for men with slack and foolish mouths.

"'Tis no great glass, goodwife," said he; "I could drain it if it was a mile or more to the bottom. I drink," said he, and stood up like a mast, "to the gentleman of Corodale. I am his man from this on. Is it the fire?—there is the hand! The knife for him?—here is the bosom! Oh, the sea, the sea! the tremendous sea, and terrible! I have lived on it, and lived by it, and still I hate it like the very hell when there's but a plank between me and purgatory, even though my oars are in the arm-pits of the waves. It serves me right that I should

be forgetful of the good St Michael's Day. But I drink to the hero."

"Who has not the best of memories himself," said Col, laughing. "We are so far from the ordinances yonder at Corodale, and I am so much from home that even I will now and then overlook spiritual matters. And what luck had you, just old man, at the day's fishing?"

"What but Michaelmas luck?"

"A good catch?"

"No, but very near it; a Protestant from Benbecula who shot a fathom or two to the side of me had, I am sure, three cran."

"So!" said Col; "the English have a saying that has more sense than most of their sayings—that a miss is as good as a mile; it pertains marvelously to a fisherman who hales empty nets from alongside full ones. And God seems careless enough to be so kind to heretics from Benbecula."

The goodwife looked through the Spanish beard and crossed herself; she had no taste for irreligious levity, and there the *ceilidh* company shared her sentiment, thinking the Corodale hero scarcely considerate of his pleasantries on a Michaelmas night. Dark John coughed to cover the disgrace of his rescuer, and did it so well that it ended in a real convulsion.

"It is there you have the bad cough, old man," said the goodwife.

"He will be wanting another glass," said the woman who was unkind, and teased wool

with a gusto as if it were the fibres of bachelor mankind.

"A bad enough cough I'll allow," said Dark John; "but there's many a one in Boisdale burying-ground would like to have it this night."

A demand rose for the dance of Cailleag-an-Dunan—the Mill-dust-man. The piper was called from Geepie's; up he set his drones upon his shoulder and played like a MacCruimen of Skye, while a man and woman made attitudes graceful or grotesque before each other till the woman fell at last upon the floor, play-acting death. Her partner made moan for his dead carlin, dancing still about her body, stopping to breathe upon her palms or touch her with a willow wand. But she did not stir till he had kissed her on the lips, and then she sprang joyfully to life that ever comes from love, and again the dance went on.

Col smiled with an outer aspect of sympathy; but the goodwife looked at his beard, and was annoyed to see his lips.

"You are perhaps tired of our poor play?" said she hastily, jealous of her guests.

"On my word," said he, "I have seldom enjoyed myself better. 'Tis ten years, no more nor less, since I saw Cailleag-an-Dunan danced in Corodale. Folks in our part have lost the skill of it." And then he saw that she was annoyed, and she knew he saw it, and was vexed to make a stranger feel uneasy, so she gave him the first word of her flattery that night.

"They have not lost their

skill of swimming, at least," she said, "as the old man there has reason well to know. You are a lucky man, that is so friendly with the heartless sea. Mary forgive me that I should speak so of her Treasury!"

"The sea is no friend of mine, though much she owes me. And still I am much on the sea," he explained, "though something of a landlord by estate." He whispered in her ear, "I have an interest in a sloop that sometimes runs a little Barra cordial to the mainland."

"I have heard a breath of that among the men-folk," whispered back the goodwife. "O king! good winds be ever behind you in that. In Barra and Mingulay are honest pious Catholics like ourselves, and well deserving."

"Doubtless, goodwife, doubtless!" said he of the Spanish beard, "but for once their Michaelmas has gone by without some mainland commodities, for the *Happy Return*, launched by Master Paul, priest of Barra, and with three vials of holy water in her den, is two days overdue. I left Corodale yesterday to look for signs of her, and thought she might have been driven through the Sound by last night's storm, and might be beating in upon this side of Uist to-day, but never a glimpse of the *Happy Return*."

"Oh Righ!" said the goodwife.

"Blest be the boat
By our King of the elements,
Blest be the boat!"

crossing herself the while.

"It is a pious rune," admitted Col of Corodale; "but I wish my skipper may have been depending more on his own seamanship than on prayers."

"But the prayers of the faithful!" said the goodwife eagerly. "Oh! they avail, Corodale. Seven skiffs have I seen brought safe to land through the wildest weather simply through the supplications of Master Ludovick."

Col smiled. "There," said he, "is angelic navigation for you! A good priest, they say; but I fear he could not put all his power into prayer for a smuggler's sloop, for there's some of the cloth are mighty particular nowadays."

"It is true he does not favour the honest free trade," she confessed, "otherwise you might have asked his services. For indeed he is mighty in prayer, more than any other priest in the Long Island, and can wrestle with the worst agents. He might have been among us to-night, for affable exceedingly is Master Ludovick, and loves the old devices; but he has an uncle that is of great years and is near his end, as you may have heard across the way in Corodale, and Master Ludovick and his sister have gone early home to-night."

"His sister?" said Col, with a little livelier interest; "I thought she was in France."

"Indeed, the dear creature! and she was, just man, for five years at her schooling, but came home again three months ago; and long may she be with us, till the right man comes to take her!"

"It was Anna I saw, then, in Saxon clothes among the company at the games?"

"Just herself, Corodale, just herself—Dame Lightfoot, Little Anna with the fifty-years' fortune," said the goodwife fondly, like one who spoke about a daughter of her own.

"Fortune?" said Col, with an accent of his voice as if he spoke a line of song. She cast a quick glance into his beard and saw avarice.

"It is just a saying of the common folks," said she hastily. "They are talking about a treasure; faith! who gets our Anna gets a treasure better far than the red metal of the MacNeil's *ulaidh*."

When she said that, young Corodale laughed. "MacNeil's Treasure," said he. "You are speaking of the Prince's money from Loch Arkaig? An old tale yon! I am fearing there is little of it to the fore now that Anna's uncle is at his end. I have heard my father"—("May your father have his share of paradise!" murmured the goodwife, piously crossing herself)—"I have heard my father often speak of this money, and laugh at the notion of any of it being left."

"That may be as it may," said the goodwife, "but here we have another way of it." And stopped suddenly, annoyed at the mouth below the Spanish beard.

"But the treasure would not be Anna's in any case," said Col, with his mind briskly turning over all considerations. "It would more properly be her brother the priest's—no, no,

now that I mind of it, the men who made the pact knew better, as my father had the story, and agreed that a priest should never share a second time the secret of the Loch Arkaig *ulaidh*. They were wise in their generation."

"God be about us!" said the goodwife humbly. "Who would touch it till the appointed time?"

A flash came in Corodale's eyes. "The appointed time," said he, "of course, *Dhe!* have I not forgotten? If there was not another Rising in fifty years, the money was to go to the last survivors or their families. And the last is Master Alan's uncle, the old man of Dermosary. When will the time be up, good woman?"

"I do not know, and I do not care," said she shortly, and cried across to a guest, "Oh, Hector, tell us the tale of Manus." And the guest started a tale that seemed like to last till the crowing of cocks, but all were happy and all intent upon his story, except the dark man from Corodale.

He made calculations, ticking the years off with his hand inside his waistcoat on his heart, so eager on it, so apt to blunder in his hurry, that he wished he had a score of fingers on each hand.

"Why, by the soul of me!" said he to the goodwife at last, a light in his eyes, and his mouth to her more unpleasant than ever—"there's no more than a year to run. Come next Feill Michael the Treasure will be Anna's. Lucky indeed

was Anna—if the tale were true.” The goodwife paid no heed. “Twenty thousand pounds!” he said to himself softly in English no one there could understand. “I have heard my father mention it a score of times. He believed the stuff was still wherever it was hidden when they brought it to the Isles, and many a day he searched for it when fishing had been more profitable. Twenty thousand pounds in louis of France, crusadoes of Spain, and English guineas! Lord! what a hole it would cobble in Corodale’s brogues, that’s like to suffer again by the loss of the *Happy Return*, stove in maybe on Barra Head of Mingulay.” He lost himself in thoughts the most indulgent, the most luxurious. What could he not do with twenty thousand pounds? No longer this ridge of rock, this narrow life among unable simpletons. With half twenty thousand pounds he could take the world for his pillow and see to the very end of things—travel, adventure, purchase, love and win. Twenty thousand pounds; God! twenty thousand pounds! In the hands—as it were—of a schoolgirl! What days and nights were in a tenth part of that sum! And still—and still—not so very much in itself after all; some people ill-deserving had far more—but in what a bold spirit could make out of it. He turned over in his pocket some coins that had been his first care when he was dragged ashore with Dark John drenched; he turned them over, and they felt singularly

lonely and insignificant. What might be made of twenty thousand pounds—the stuff itself being but dead dust? A bigger sloop was in a fraction of it, perhaps two or three; no need to run risks in the free trade, himself his old ideal—master of a fleet of fishers, or briskly trading between Castlebay and the mainland, with curing-stations round every creek in Uist, beating the encroaching east coast merchant in his own devices. Twenty thousand pounds—and every pound a bait for twenty more!

And all this was in the keeping of a girl! He felt a grievance against her, though he had never seen her close at hand since six or seven years ago, when she was but a child with no interest for him.

The night passed quickly in the house of entertainment: dance followed story, and song came after dance. “More peat: more peat!” the hearth glowed; the bairns still looked down from the loft, lying on their bellies, some asleep for weariness, and one of them fell among the company and suffered his mother’s lovable harmless chastisement. The cattle in the byre turned noisily in their stalls, a pony fastened at the gable beat wildly on the ground. Smells of mordants, of the herb-dyed clothes, of peats and pungent byres and the sea perfume—the clean, good, zesty perfume of net and line and oar—prevailed. And outside in the night there was the storm rising with the rising tide. The lights of the islands grew

less; townlands were gone to bed; the ocean tore round Kintra of the Holy Cross, and growled like a beast furious on Rhu-na-faing. Far off on Heiskar, like a star afloat upon the sea, there gleamed a beacon-fire—Heiskar was guiding in the herring shoals or warning off the foreign mariner.

And Corodale the hero, on the hero's seat beside the goodwife, turned his silver *tasdan* in his pouch, feeling the indecent passion for gold, the goodwife glancing through his Spanish beard the while, liking him less at every look, though there were half-a-dozen girls in her company who would have gone barefoot with such a noble fellow to the other end of Albyn through the storm.

"What would you do with twenty thousand pounds if you had it?" he asked her suddenly, coming out of his dreams.

"Fine I know that," said the goodwife quickly. "I would make mirth in every patch of tenant land in brindled little Uist of the sheldrakes. Tochers for the brides, and silver crown pieces of luck for the little fists of the darling new-born babies; new nets for the fishers, and braver boats. Where the land is blanched, I would spread, sow, and build. O king! what an opportunity! I am all hot to be thinking of it, sure! Good would it be indeed to be the free giver out of such a store. And first there would be a guinea for Bell Veg, that needs a new loom, and there would be five to bring the blind man's son

back from the bloody wars—oh, it would take the night to tell the marvels of merriment there would be in twenty thousand pounds; but very early and above all there would be a new tower for the chapel."

Corodale laughed.

"*Oh Dhe!* I daresay the Church has had its claw in the stuff ere now," said he, "though a priest by the pact was never again to know its whereabouts."

"Heaven forgive the thought!" said the goodwife humbly. "There would be a curse on any that handled it before the time appointed; and indeed Master Ludovick calls it cursed in any case, and has a red fury on him if he hears us call it Anna's gold."

And now the night of song and story was done; the folks, humming the airs of the songs they had heard, went forth in groups for their homes. Loud indeed was the storm on the islands; no star was to be seen except the flame of Heiskar and the twinkle of some crusie lights in Dalvoolin. Corodale went forth to his lodging in the tacksman's dwelling over the burn, pondering on hidden gold, never heeding the wind or rain, unhaunted by any tender strain of song. One by one the lights went out in windy Uist, and the night was conqueror. But in the waste and middle of it, when the storm was wildest and the hour most dark, fathers and children came out and got upon the roofs to keep the thatch from flying. They sat on the slopes of heather and straw,

beat on by rains and choking to the gusts, and sang together :—

“God shield the house, the fire, the kine,
And all who take their peace within,
Hold care aloof from me and mine,
And Mary keep us all from sin.

This night, this night, this stormy
night,

O Lightner of the stars that shine,
Pity the women, pity the bairns,
Bring peace to man, and horse, and
kine !”

They sat all night on the frail roofs along the shore, singing these and suchlike runes and hymns (if ships were passing and could hear, the seamen must have thought the waves enchanted); and there the morning found them when he came, gladly and with peace, over the hills of Hecla and Benmore.

CHAPTER III.—THE WIDOW AND HER SONS.

Col went back that day to Corodale, walking, to begin with, on the pleasant sandy plains facing the Atlantic, that turned and basked in the bosom of the world, murmuring a little in the creeks, and showing a curl of grey on the distant Monach islea. The road soon left the shore and brought him into the country of the lochs, past dark and thoughtful barks knee-deep in the rushy tarns, past ruined duns where ravens pecked in the eyeless gables—old strongholds of the tribes, remembering. Beyond Askernish and Mingary, Ollay Loch and Ormaclett Castle, and then he departed from the country of habitations and went through grave Glen Dorochay, seeking the Pass of Hellisdale that comes out upon the east of Uist.

A pleasant land to travel in upon such happy weather; on every hand the folks so rude and strong, coming along the way with cheerful salutations, engaged with natural easiness upon their season's occupations—the reaping of oat and barley, the herding of sturdy little cattle red and brown, the driv-

ing in of peats. Long strings of little horses, led by girls and boys, came out of the east where cried the lapwing, where sometimes blackguardly old Loch Boisdale sea-gulls screamed to the little rustic birds the taunt of far-travelled mariners, and every horse had its panniers laden with the turf to light and warm innumerable *ceilidhs*, to make pictures on the hearth-stones for the tales in the winter nights to come. The huts gulped smoke, the doors stood open; he had many invitations to go in and drink milk and rest.

It was pleasant exceedingly to see the young folks smiling; it was good to travel in such a land of hospitality, but Col stayed to enjoy neither one nor the other, walking quickly, and full of thought about his fortunes.

He came down the pass on Corodale when the sun was at his height and grandeur, saw the lake in Glen Usinish shining like an angel's eye; and far away, dim and faery, a vision like Ibrysail, land of eternal youth, a bard's thought breathed in vapour on the

horizon, he saw, unmoved, the cliffs, the peaks of Skye.

And at a place beside the cave where Charles Edward Stuart skulked when all his fights were done and his hopes destroyed, Col met his mother, with a bright *tonnag* of tartan wrapped over her head, as if she were for travelling.

She was altogether unlike her son, this widow woman of Corodale, notable in the isles till to-day as the best who ever danced there; so little in stature that he might have taken her like a child in his arms. She ran to him with her arms outstretched, and, never at ease in the English tongue a new gentility was bringing to the best families of the Outer Isles, though she knew it very well, she cried, "O Michael Saint! my son that was lost is found again, bless the sacred Name! And come away within this moment, and have something to eat."

She turned to walk with him towards the house, that stood in tall walls sheltering such lowly shrubs as alone will thrive upon the wind-vexed Hebrides.

"For two days I have not touched bread," said she, hanging on his arm and all trembling. "For two days! And as for sleep in such storms, with a door shut upon my son, it was impossible. Col, Col, where were you?"

He smiled, kindly at the eyes (whatever might happen below the Spanish beard). "There's news to tell in that," said he. "I was on Monday at Loch Eynort, spending the

night with our friends at Kirkidale. Yesterday I took my feet out of there with me and went west to Boisdale, and——"

"On Michaelmas Day, O king! to be travelling on affairs. Col, it is not right. Were you at Mass?"

He felt annoyed to be so questioned, but did not show it. "I went to Our Lady Star of the Sea," he said.

"My good Col!" cried out the happy mother. "And saw Master Ludovick?"

"Yes," said Col, never mentioning how brief and secular had been his seeing. "There is no word of the sloop," he hurried on. "She has been heard of neither in Loch Eynort nor on the other side. I thought she might have been driven through Sound Eriskay on Monday, and it was that sent me over to the machar side of the island; but there the sea is blank. Three days ago she should have been here in Skipport, but now I'm thinking there may be empty kegs about the Minch and dog-fish in the hold of the *Happy Return*. There was my last chance!" He became exceedingly bitter in his tone.

"*Oh Dhe!*" she cried in horror; "to have such a thought, and make so much of the vessel and so little of her seamen! I will excuse you, because you must always be putting the worst face on affairs; and it is not at all likely that so skilful a man as the skipper was anywhere else than safe in Arisaig yesterday waiting the end of the storm. He will be here to-morrow;

beat on by rains and choking to the gusts, and sang together:—

“God shield the house, the fire, the kine,
And all who take their peace within,
Hold care aloof from me and mine,
And Mary keep us all from sin.

This night, this night, this stormy
night,

O Lightner of the stars that shine,
Pity the women, pity the bairns,
Bring peace to man, and horse, and
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They sat all night on the frail roofs along the shore, singing these and suchlike runes and hymns (if ships were passing and could hear, the seamen must have thought the waves enchanted); and there the morning found them when he came, gladly and with peace, over the hills of Hecla and Benmore.

CHAPTER III.—THE WIDOW AND HER SONS.

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and now I must go and comfort his wife."

"And still," said Col, "I wish I had the comfort of but the one look of the sloop, and her with her mast standing. This north wind takes three days before its heart is broken——"

"——And this is the fourth," said she, determined to make him more cheerful, "and look what a day it is, with the sea, as the men are telling me, all shivering with fish. We went to Mass yesterday, in St Mary's, Roderic and I; but my Michaelmas morning cake is still on the board: I had not the heart to go among the poor people. But now I'll be hurrying among them, seeing you are home again. It was wrong of me to stay at home."

"There is nothing in that that heaven will not look over, for we are poor enough ourselves."

"Not so poor," said she briskly, "but there are others will be thinking us as wealthy as the kings, Col."

"That is Duncan's way of it; my own is greatly different. By all the old great stones, I have had such plans!"

"Plans, *mo chreach!*" said she. "It is richer you would be, my son, with plain contentment."

"You are learning Duncan's lesson very well," said Col, and stared ahead of him as they neared the house in the glen.

"We could have no more than we have," said the mother. "Here's a comfortable dwelling—praise Mary! and the good building of your great-great-grandfather! Here's our own

land with Mary's Treasury lapping at our door, and every fisherman will bring his basket for us to pick from before he takes a fin to his own fireside, even if he must live himself on the dog-fish afterwards."

"It is good, mother, that you are so easily pleased. I have other notions myself of what is comfort. But indeed what am I to be complaining, that am only your second son?"

"You are the only son of your father, my goodman—peace with him and his share of Paradise!" said the little woman, her face exalted. "Duncan—dear heart!—would be the last to think of things in that way."

They had come to the garden wall. Corodale House, that was as high as a tree in this treeless glen, and as grey as the rocks, and speckled with windows, blind or lozenge, had one gable of greater antiquity than the rest, with broken gun-ports for a hint of other days. Col stopped and looked at it, struck for the first time in his life with some sense of its humility.

"Where's Duncan?" he asked suddenly.

"He has but new come home," said the mother. "Like yourself he has been gone all night."

"All night!" said Col, astonished. "And where was he all night?"

"I was anxious about you; I had dreams, I saw you swimming for your life——"

"By the name of God!" cried Col, and faced her, "you were not far amiss. I had to

do some swimming last night down at Boisdale for an old man who but for me would never sup crowdy nor set eyes on Uist again."

"A drowning man," said his mother, with a start; "a drowning man, and you saved him. I am glad, and I am sorry, for whoever takes its spoil from the sea, the spoil, they say, will punish."

"The saying's a silly one," said Col, uneasy to hear it so soon again.

"Where's Duncan?"

"All night the poor lad searched on either side of the fords and is just come home, and is now at a melancholy meal."

They entered the gate. In the shelter of the old house that had seen wars there was every sign of calm affairs,—a barn with cockerels pecking grain; a byre where a cow was being milked by a servant-maid, who sat on a stool with her cheek against the flank and sprayed the milk in the frothing cogue, looking from the dusk out into the dazzling sun. Pigeons, too, pure white, paraded with trailing wings about their loves before the door, and a hundred starlings chattered on the ridges of the roofs. A pleasant, flourishing place enough, and yet Col of Corodale felt it more than ever mean.

"Duncan, Duncan! here is Col!" cried out his mother at the door. A man inside laughed gladly with all his heart, laughed as a boy might laugh in his sleep at some keen joy tickling his dreams. So the well laughs in the mountains when it

tumbles into linns among the heather and the fern. He ran out, sweeping his brown hair from his temples, and caught his brother by the shoulders and shook him playfully, crying the while, "Son of the one I'll mention not! here is a fine joke upon the mother and on me; come home, vagabond, come home!" He was slighter than Col but every inch as tall, brown where the other was black, scarce so handsome, and yet more pleasant in the countenance, clean-shaven, womanly at the mouth, and glanced from a tranquil eye.

"Come in and eat, lad!" he cried, with the universal welcome of these isles, pulling his brother's arm. He spoke in English. "I have been spoiling my own dinner these twenty minutes with the foolishlest speculations about you; now I'll make up for it."

But when they were before the food it was Col who ate the heartiest after all, while Duncan, eating little, listened to the other's story.

"Bah! Col," he cried, "it's ever the worst look-out with you. Your skipper is too good a seaman to lose the *Happy Return* or to be caught in yesterday's weather anywhere west of Arisaig. I wish he had other cargoes—but no; no, no; I'll say nothing of that now, Col; take your meat like a man! A stuck priest should be sparing of his homilies, in case the world laugh at him."

Col frowned, plucking his Spanish beard.

"I have heard you often on that tack, Duncan," said he. "My small ventures in the free

trade seem to be spoiling your sleep. You are more particular on that score than the clergy themselves. Faith! many a keg I've had Flying Jib-boom slip in at the presbytery houses in Moidart. But that's all done with, perhaps, if the *Happy Return* belies her name for once. If you want to know, I'm seeing a gloomy time for us in Corodale."

"The last year I was in Passy," said the other, sharing none of his apprehension, "there was a French student there who saw ruin in every washing-bill. His face turned whiter than the linen every time the *blanchesseuse* unpinned her account from her basket. On the last day of his term he fell heir to twenty thousand louis, and without a moment's swithering he gave it all to the Jesuits."

"Twenty thousand!" cried Col with a start. "The luck of the world seems to run in twenty thousand. I like the ring of twenty thousand; it sings itself like a good song: more than twenty thousand would be awkward, less would be scrimp."

Duncan laughed.

"Keep a close grip on your envy, lad," cried he; "doesn't our Gaelic proverb say it is the second cousin of avarice, and wears the same tartan?"

"I think nobody can call me miserly," said Col.

"I thought nothing of the kind; I meant that there's the root of it in every man that has imagination and a love of power."

"You talk about Passy!" said Col. "Now let me tell

you, I wish to heaven you had gone through with it; faith! it seems to me silly enough to boggle at one or two doctrines of the Church and swallow all the rest without backing."

He saw his brother's face show vexation, and hurriedly begged his pardon; then plunged into the bitter recitation of evils that had of late befallen all his ventures. Two seasons' fishing had been failures; cattle had died, sheep had been lost by the trembling, two cargoes of Barra cordial had been confiscate by the excise.

"And yet what the poorer are we, Col?" asked his brother. "We sleep as soft, we eat as well, we are sheltered as securely, and clothed as warmly as when Corodale was at its best."

"It took five hundred pounds from Corodale to teach you what your notion was about the Church," retorted Col, again angry. His brother gently smiled, his eyes half-shut upon the other's rudeness.

"I could make an easy answer to that, dear brother."

"Yes, I know, I know," said Col, hurried and more bitter still. "Out with it, Duncan, man! out with it! Corodale is none of mine, and I am but the beggar for your bounty. It is yours I have ventured with and lost—do I not know it?"

"I have not said a word of that, brother," said Duncan; "I had forgot; I gave up all for the Church——"

"It was not on paper," said Col, pulling his beard, and men-

tioning the fact as if it were a grudge.

"Our parents meant me for the priesthood and you for the world; there was no contract needed between us; what money there was at hand seven years ago went to keep me in Paris and make it plain that Duncan, son of Ranald, was not the stuff priests are made of. All I got from the money spent on me was that I found myself and lost a calling. Col, *ille!* 'tis I that am the beggar, ashamed to be here but half-employed. All I expect from Corodale is shelter, till I have decided what to make elsewhere of the trivial learning it cost Corodale so much to get for me."

"If things go on as they are doing, I must go elsewhere without even the learning. If I had had it instead of you, I might have made more of it than you did; but the one thing is certain, there is little room for two of us in Corodale: perhaps if the sloop is really lost, there is little enough for one."

Duncan looked on him with some surprise: this was not altogether the brother who had gone away two days ago. And so, someway, thought the mother; and so indeed thought the workpeople of Corodale when that day Col went out among them.

Many a glance he cast to sea, but never found a sloop upon the rollers. The women loading and leading peats upon the moss found him changed: he that had hitherto gone

among them anxious to have the best of their labours, but always with some jocundity, now drove without a smile.

"God be about us! what ails the poor man?" they said, lading up the creels or binding corn, and speaking before their master freely, as they always do in Uist. "His Michaelmas cake must have disagreed with the stomach of him, for black's his aspect, as black as his father's before him."

"What ails the brother?" they asked Duncan, when he in his turn came smiling and hearty among them. "He has got a turn through Boisdale reek, and come back with his face like thunder."

"Worry, good folks, just worry, the worst dog in the pack. There is no sign of the sloop?"

"*Oh Dhe!*" cried the labourers, "St Michael keep off all dangers! What would become of the widows of her skipper and his crew?"

"They would starve—like the rest of us," said Col, overhearing, and left the field.

He spent a sullen day; at night he went early to bed, in an upper room below the roof of Corodale House. It had been lit by his mother with two candles; he pinched them out, and looked from the little window into the garden and over the fields and out as far as he might upon the sea, that he had robbed of its spoil, and now—it might be in the first of its revenge—had robbed him of his sloop. The moon, enormous, stared upon the Isles.

CHAPTER IV.—THE FIFTY-YEARS' FORTUNE.

For little Anna there were many by-names in the Isles. So rare indeed they thought her that, following the Gaelic custom, which makes us seldom speak directly of the thing we love, lest heaven or the elves have their remembrance called to it and something happen, her just cognomen was scarcely breathed among her brother's people. She was in the language "Herself," or "Yon Little One," or "The Lady of the White House." But oftenest was she "MacNeil's Treasure"—a play upon the island story of the Fifty-Years' Fortune.

When she went through the townships scattered among the hollows round the rock of Stella Maris, bringing the wind in her wonderful flowing garments, a dash of the sun in her hair for the blackest hut, the folks would for ever be wondering how Uist had got on without her while she was away in France. The households she could gladden in a little short winter afternoon—oh, 'twas a miracle entirely! and yet 'twould be by trivial acts as natural to her as smile or song—by no more than a word of merriment or a turned pillow for one bedridden, or a housewifely question for that other busy at her loom with the crucifix over it; by a sort of timid pretence at manly pleasantries for burners of kelp, that made them laugh as she passed their kilns near the rocks of Torrisdale; or by a distant call to fishermen barking their nets along the shore.

"There's Herself!" the young fellows would cry, seeing her gown flap in morning breezes as her airy figure ran down the hill from the White House, and she sped for a hut where possibly some poor creature could not believe it morning till Herself appeared, the true dawn, the best of sunshine, at the door. And they would stand—these bold admiring lads—among their nets or jump upon a thwart to look after her, but always with some other thing to do suddenly if she should happen to look round and see them. Her presence among the little clustered dwellings seemed to change the air, as was said; the busiest housewife at her fire knew the girl was there without, and would hasten to her door to see Little Anna, and to say "God be between her and harm!" When she entered a house the gravest smiled without knowing why; when she had gone, dulness seized on the blythest company, and there was an understanding that at any *ceilidh* she would be the last to leave for home. There was one, indeed, a tacksman, a gallant sentimental man, who, when gatherings were in his house, was used to seek the loft and go to bed before she had departed, having a happiness in hearing her voice below, yet trying to fall asleep before this blessing had gone from under his roof-tree, leaving behind the commonplace. Girls loved her garments, unlike any

they had ever seen before, magnificent beyond words, made for her, as the bard of Hellisdale said in verse, "from the melody of the birds." The boldest would venture to finger her cloak unnoticed, delicately, tenderly, as if it were a portion of her body. As for the bairns, dear hearts! Herself was another Mary: how often the wildest boys on their knees in Stella Maris were looking at her and making of that their devotion? Outside they would stand in bands open-eyed, admiring, ready to join her laughter.

The best gifts we get are from those who have nothing but themselves to give us. The Lady of the White House gave herself in affection, in understanding, in the help of her heart and her hands. She had left the Isles when she was scarcely more than a child, and shy beyond expression; she came back a woman, at ease with herself and the world, to be the mistress of their hearts. In three months she had grown as needful to the happiness of Uist as the very chapel on the windy hill.

But from Michaelmas Day till All Saints' Day the townships had to be doing without her presence, so that bleak season seemed more bleak than usual. The old man her uncle was dying, and they sat up with him—as they say—waiting on his end. For himself there were three things only to make him sorry to go travelling—he had a craving to see England again, that he had marched through when scarcely

out of his teens on an escapade with Charles Edward; he had a common vanity of his race, to make up the tale of his years to a round ninety, and yet a twelvemonth was a-wanting; and he wished to see Little Anna the veritable mistress of the Loch Arkaig gold.

She valued the prospect of such a fortune no more than a handful of shells, except for the opportunity it might give of bringing happiness to others. The tower for Stella Maris—an old project of the poor people, who had built the church with their own hands (the children carrying up the sand)—was one of the earliest notions that entered her head; the mention of it always found her brother Ludovick cold. For him the hidden fortune was trash unspeakable; that a priest should have gone to hell for the sake of it made him count it, from the days of his own frocking, a thing cursed. The folks of the island soon discovered how bitter the Lord of the Isles could be upon this topic—the only one that ever seemed to rouse his anger. Between his uncle and himself the mention of it was never breathed.

And now Dermosary was dying. There was no doubt about it. He had been anointed for the grave. He had been wild in youth, and fierce beyond middle age, a man of rock, and the sea waves salt and beating in his veins so deceiving him that he insisted every day he should sit up and keep death out of him by clenching his teeth; but

each day he was a little more humped in his chair, his teeth more frequently fell apart.

That the end was come was, in the long-run, first discovered to the people by a boy. He had been playing with his fellows round the White House byre on an early evening and hid behind a door. Standing in the dark there, breathless with his running, and chuckling silently to himself, the boy put his hand upon a plank that shared his concealment. It was broader than a boat's thwart, polished to the touch, higher than a man. For a little he held it in front of him and cried upon the others, and then his finger went inquiring along its edge. He felt the plank swell out above his head and then fall in again, —to any boy in Uist that shape of wood was eloquent—he had come upon a stretching-board! His horror would not have been greater had it been the body itself for which the stretcher was intended; he went out screaming and ran home, as we say, on the four oars.

Twenty minutes later old MacNeil of Dermosary was dead. The black house people, called to the lee of their dwelling by the boy's alarm, knew it from the growing glow of candles in the room where he had so long been prisoner.

"God sain him!" said the women. The men took off their

bonnets. "May the Possessor keep him in His keeping!" said they, and thought just a moment upon some stuff concealed beyond their discovery between the Mingulay rocks and Ronay. Some went up to the White House and sat the night through with the candles round the body, silent and discreet for the sake of Herself and Father Ludovick, though in any other home in Uist they would have passed the evening differently. At morning, too, others came with funeral gifts—cakes, halibut, and fowls; and the day was silent, with no noise of looms or oars, as if it had been a day of Obligation: not that such was customary, for death is too frequent in the Isles, but that, loving their priest and Little Anna, the good folks felt that thus they must honour the clay below their roofs. Even the children were kept indoors, and the wind had it all its own way, without a challenge from laugh or song.

Born and bred among tempests, he went properly in tempest to his rest; for very high and shrill blew the north wind that day on Uist of the shel-drakes. When the people were at Mass the sea-pyot came on glancing wings and cried around Our Lady Star of the Sea, its call breaking the solemn silences, and giving the fisherman and his wife a link with the familiar comprehended universe.

(To be continued.)

SOME GOSSIP ABOUT OLD PRINTS.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL C. À COURT, C.M.G.

FEW of us expect any remarkable initiative on the part of a Government office, and it is therefore with the greater pleasure that many people in all classes of life will have read the announcement that the Board of Education has projected a Loan Exhibition of Engraving and Etching for the early months of next year. The news will be welcomed by the wide and ever-increasing circle of enthusiastic print-collectors, who have hitherto been seldom able to examine and compare at their leisure the best work of the leading exponents of this fascinating art.

Superb as is the collection of the British Museum, and models of courtesy though the attendants are, the Print Room is undeniably more adapted to the examination of single specimens than to the survey of a period or of a style. The prints are all stored away in portfolios, and some time is necessarily lost in tracing them and presenting them to visitors, with the consequence that this storehouse of gems is but little known to the general public. Space is wanting, and also the means for exhibiting specimens on the walls. What is required is a separate establishment, a large gallery for exhibition, a more generous endowment, and a better appreciation of the great artistic value of the

treasures amassed by the intelligent foresight of our predecessors.

Another point deserving of consideration by the Government, now that it is engaged in turning its swords into "scrapers," is the question of revising the very strict rules which debar the Museum from lending their fine prints even for the purposes of an official exhibition. These precautions are really excessive, and might at least be relaxed in the case of the numerous duplicates which the Museum possesses. After all, the prints belong to the nation, and the nation has the right to look at them.

The programme of the forthcoming Exhibition is a very extensive one, embracing as it does old and modern copper and steel engravings, line, mezzotint, stipple, aquatint, and etching. I shall only venture one criticism of the scheme — namely, that, although it is on a smaller scale than what was first contemplated, it is still too pretentious and covers too wide a field, affording grounds for doubt whether the officials have quite realised the magnitude of the ambitious task they have set themselves with such a light heart. It would have been better, in my opinion, to have restricted the Exhibition to one period or one style of engraving — say, the mezzo-

beat on by rains and choking to the gusts, and sang together :—

“God shield the house, the fire, the kine,
And all who take their peace within,
Hold care aloof from me and mine,
And Mary keep us all from sin.

This night, this night, this stormy
night,

O Lightner of the stars that shine,
Pity the women, pity the bairns,
Bring peace to man, and horse, and
kine !”

They sat all night on the frail roofs along the shore, singing these and suchlike runes and hymns (if ships were passing and could hear, the seamen must have thought the waves enchanted); and there the morning found them when he came, gladly and with peace, over the hills of Hecla and Benmore.

CHAPTER III.—THE WIDOW AND HER SONS.

Col went back that day to Corodale, walking, to begin with, on the pleasant sandy plains facing the Atlantic, that turned and basked in the bosom of the world, murmuring a little in the creeks, and showing a curl of grey on the distant Monach isles. The road soon left the shore and brought him into the country of the lochs, past dark and thoughtful barps knee-deep in the rushy tarns, past ruined duns where ravens pecked in the eyeless gables—old strongholds of the tribes, remembering. Beyond Askernish and Mingary, Ollay Loch and Ormaclett Castle, and then he departed from the country of habitations and went through grave Glen Dorochay, seeking the Pass of Hellisdale that comes out upon the east of Uist.

A pleasant land to travel in upon such happy weather; on every hand the folks so rude and strong, coming along the way with cheerful salutations, engaged with natural easiness upon their season's occupations—the reaping of oat and barley, the herding of sturdy little cattle red and brown, the driv-

ing in of peats. Long strings of little horses, led by girls and boys, came out of the east where cried the lapwing, where sometimes blackguardly old Loch Boisdale sea-gulls screamed to the little rustic birds the taunt of far-travelled mariners, and every horse had its panniers laden with the turf to light and warm innumerable *ceilidhs*, to make pictures on the hearth-stones for the tales in the winter nights to come. The huts gulped smoke, the doors stood open; he had many invitations to go in and drink milk and rest.

It was pleasant exceedingly to see the young folks smiling; it was good to travel in such a land of hospitality, but Col stayed to enjoy neither one nor the other, walking quickly, and full of thought about his fortunes.

He came down the pass on Corodale when the sun was at his height and grandeur, saw the lake in Glen Usinish shining like an angel's eye; and far away, dim and faery, a vision like Ibrysail, land of eternal youth, a bard's thought breathed in vapour on the

horizon, he saw, unmoved, the cliffs, the peaks of Skye.

And at a place beside the cave where Charles Edward Stuart skulked when all his fights were done and his hopes destroyed, Col met his mother, with a bright *tonnag* of tartan wrapped over her head, as if she were for travelling.

She was altogether unlike her son, this widow woman of Corodale, notable in the isles till to-day as the best who ever danced there; so little in stature that he might have taken her like a child in his arms. She ran to him with her arms outstretched, and, never at ease in the English tongue a new gentility was bringing to the best families of the Outer Isles, though she knew it very well, she cried, "O Michael Saint! my son that was lost is found again, bless the sacred Name! And come away within this moment, and have something to eat."

She turned to walk with him towards the house, that stood in tall walls sheltering such lowly shrubs as alone will thrive upon the wind-vexed Hebrides.

"For two days I have not touched bread," said she, hanging on his arm and all trembling. "For two days! And as for sleep in such storms, with a door shut upon my son, it was impossible. Col, Col, where were you?"

He smiled, kindly at the eyes (whatever might happen below the Spanish' beard). "There's news to tell in that," said he. "I was on Monday at Loch Eynort, spending the

night with our friends at Kirkidale. Yesterday I took my feet out of there with me and went west to Boisdale, and——"

"On Michaelmas Day, O king! to be travelling on affairs. Col, it is not right. Were you at Mass?"

He felt annoyed to be so questioned, but did not show it. "I went to Our Lady Star of the Sea," he said.

"My good Col!" cried out the happy mother. "And saw Master Ludovick?"

"Yes," said Col, never mentioning how brief and secular had been his seeing. "There is no word of the sloop," he hurried on. "She has been heard of neither in Loch Eynort nor on the other side. I thought she might have been driven through Sound Eriskay on Monday, and it was that sent me over to the machar side of the island; but there the sea is blank. Three days ago she should have been here in Skiport, but now I'm thinking there may be empty kegs about the Minch and dog-fish in the hold of the *Happy Return*. There was my last chance!" He became exceedingly bitter in his tone.

"*Oh Dhe!*" she cried in horror; "to have such a thought, and make so much of the vessel and so little of her seamen! I will excuse you, because you must always be putting the worst face on affairs; and it is not at all likely that so skilful a man as the skipper was anywhere else than safe in Arisaig yesterday waiting the end of the storm. He will be here to-morrow;

done more to popularise the fine arts than any academy or society in existence.

Strangely enough, the number of really good judges of fine prints in England is extremely limited. There are of course the great London dealers, and scattered here and there a few more in the provinces—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*; there are some millionaire collectors and a small but very enthusiastic band of amateur connoisseurs; but taking the mass of the people, it is really astounding, considering the number interested in the art and the large number of ready buyers, how few know a good print when they see one or understand the alphabet of the art. How few there are who can go to Christie's and select a print on their own judgment without consulting a dealer: how many there are who at provincial sales constantly let slip the opportunity of acquiring modest fortunes for the want of a little trouble and a little study. For study and experience are both required, and there is no royal road to print-collecting, be the collector never so satisfied with his eye and his judgment: there is a very formidable literature to assimilate, books too which bring high prices and cannot easily be procured, and then there is the need for frequenting the British Museum or some other fine collection, and of studying the psychology of the sale-rooms.

Every now and then the general public reads languidly of high prices paid for old engravings, yet to the great

majority the paragraph conveys little. There are hundreds who read these things in blissful ignorance that they possess on the walls of their country-houses, or stored away in old portfolios in their attics, treasures many times more valuable than the speculative investments which they study nervously after breakfast in the City article of the 'Times.' Others again, reading of 1200 guineas cheerfully paid for an old engraving, believe that the hobby of collecting is reserved for millionaires, and despair of acquiring treasures of such value. Yet with care and with time it is quite possible, even *à l'heure qu'il est*, to build up a collection representative of the whole history of British engraving, without excessive expenditure, if judgment waits on knowledge and patience on both. Taking the very lowest point of view, and regarding collecting as a mere monetary speculation, there is no better investment in the market than old engravings of the right sort, since values have for years been steadily rising at the rate of perhaps over 20 per cent per annum. The Blyth sale last year was a case in point: this collection had been made by the late Mr Blyth, advised by one of the best of the London dealers, during some fifteen years before his death at a cost of about £7000, and if my memory is not at fault it realised something like £27,000 at public auction. No great collection of the best sort has since come under the hammer: had such fate befallen the magnificent collection of the

late Lord Cheylesmore, all previous records would undoubtedly have been far surpassed.

To-day the rage is all for "first states" of the full-length portraits of women after Reynolds and his greatest colleagues, and for the most exquisite of the old stippled prints in colours. On the other hand, engraved portraits of famous men, Scriptural, historical, and some allegorical designs, and all line engravings, except those of the French school, go for next to nothing. A collector of taste who does not slavishly follow the fashion can acquire the finest proofs of Woollett's work after the Smiths or Richard Wilson for about a fifth of the price paid thirty years ago. Many of these things are superb. Take, for example, Woollett's First and Second Premium prints: for breadth and vigour of execution in the foregrounds and for tenderness and lightness of touch in the distances these works have never been equalled, and will probably never be surpassed. Fortunate is the collector who can secure them, for fashion always, sooner or later, returns from its rambles and recognises whatever is really fine and meritorious in art.

The reason why prints of women frequently run up to 1000 guineas while proofs of men's portraits can still be bought for a few pounds is quite simple. *Men* buy pictures, and they have the good taste to prefer the ladies. From the point of view of art

this is absurd, as Euclid used to depress our youth by inauspiciously observing; but fashion is a woman, and the wise man will not argue with her. At the same time one must candidly admit that, granted Fox was a great parliamentarian and Wesley a moving preacher, the counterfeit presentment of such celebrities cannot honestly be described as decorative, and it is this quality in the portraits of old masters which now secures such high prices.

Some day perhaps an enterprising patron of the fine arts will be sufficiently patriotic to desire to restore the lost charms of both stipple and mezzotint. The thing is possible, and from every point of view is worth doing. I believe there is one stipple engraver left in England, but I cannot name a second, nor do I believe that the solitary exponent of the school which Ryland and Bartolozzi founded, and Burke, Tomkins, and Caroline Watson brought to such a pitch of excellence, is by any means overwhelmed with commissions. Yet, at the very apogee of the early English school of painting, stippled prints, married to colour engraving, commanded a ready sale, and the best examples realise long prices in the salerooms to-day. Mezzotint, it is true, is still very much in evidence, but how terribly fallen from its highest estate! Take a print engraved about 1790 and place it alongside the best of the modern work, and cease to wonder why even a second-rate portrait of the old school com-

mands a hundred times the value of the modern print. In the former there is depth, tone, harmony, a soft and velvety impression, richness and warmth, and, above all, character: the modern print, on the other hand, though often brilliant and effective, is generally cold, flat, hard, and unsympathetic. It is not that our modern artist-engravers fail, it is their public that fails them—the publishers, who insist on steel-faced plates for the sake of facility for reproduction; the buyers, who cannot distinguish what they have lost by the absence of the soft and ductile qualities of the old copper-plates. But the plate is not everything: the modern system of “laying the ground” of the plate differs materially from the old: the hard, unreceptive, machine-made paper now used is also incapable of receiving and absorbing the ink in the manner done by the old hand-made paper: the ink, the act of printing—all is changed. Artists do not now give the personal attention to their engravers’ plates that they used to do, while engravers expect the printers to do half their work. Thus, while engravers and printers are often equal to the old school as artists, and generally superior to them as draughtsmen and mechanics, the work they turn out is immeasurably inferior. I can see no vestige of a sign that it will ripen and harmonise as the old engraving seems to have done with the lapse of time, and our only consolation is that the paper will probably

crumble away before the century closes, and the entire product of the age be lost to futurity.

I believe this can all be changed. I believe that copper-plates can be made precisely identical with the old, and the ground laid similarly by the careful study of a good model. Hand-made paper of the right sort can be provided when the demand for it begins, and meanwhile the old paper can still be procured, though with difficulty. All the rest is a matter of close attention to detail. Going into the matter with a leading publisher in London, I found that the cost of issuing a single plate in the way I have indicated would amount to £400, half of which represents the fee of a leading engraver at the head of his profession. Now, with a copperplate one cannot safely reckon on more than twenty proofs and fifty print copies before the plate may have to be reworked and perhaps ruined: one would therefore have to issue the proofs at, say, £10 and the prints at £4 to merely cover the expenses, apart from all question of profit, and there would still be the risk of the work not finding a market if the subject were not wisely chosen and the engraving not well done.

In the old days a proof rarely cost more than two guineas on publication, and a print from 5s. to a sovereign according to the size of the plate, and there was still a good profit secured. All fees and expenses were lower. I am inclined to think

that the public would be quick to recognise a return to the best traditions, and would not be averse to pay rather a higher price than at present: the small issue and rarity of each print would also be an additional attraction. In any case it is my belief that both stipple and mezzotint could be restored to the artistic excellence achieved a hundred years ago; but it is not likely that this will be done unless some patriotic person is prepared to risk his money, and is not disheartened by a first failure. Should, however, any lover of the art care to embark upon the undertaking on the chance of coupling his name with the revival of the best traditions of an important English art, I would willingly give my time to the supervision of the details, every one of which is important not only in itself but in relation to the artistic harmony of the whole.

I am often asked to advise about buying prints, and my advice is always to buy the best things and not to waste money on the purchase of inferior impressions of even good subjects. Better one fine Valentine Green of a full-length Reynolds than fifty cheap prints or worn impressions.

Above all, a beginner should be encouraged to exercise independence of judgment; for in art, as in everything else, there is a great tendency to follow the fashion. If a collector has good taste and good judgment, and knows how to wait, he will be sure to succeed; if not, no amount of advice will be of any service to him. He may choose

a period, an artist, an engraver, or a style, and resolutely adhere to his specialty, or he may have a more catholic taste, and prefer to have a few examples of all schools and styles. The first method is well suited to a collector who stores his treasures in portfolios, the second to wall decoration. In the first case the question of margin assumes a certain importance, especially for the preservation of the prints from ill-usage; in the second, brilliancy of impression comes first, but margin must not be neglected, since the fact must be recognised that a wide margin adds very materially to the market value of a print. In hanging prints upon a wall there are questions of framing, of light, of wall-paper, and of arrangement, all of which require taste and supervision, in order that the prints may appear to the best advantage. Much of the beauty of old engravings can be, and often is, lost by bad framing, ill-chosen mounts, or unsuitable wall-papers: a fierce garish light is also a disadvantage. Every collector has his own ideas about framing and mounting: personally I prefer black-and-gold of English make for all uncoloured prints; fairly simple gilt frames of old patterns for coloured prints, and French gilt frames for all the French school, whether plain or coloured. Wall-papers should in all cases be without pattern, or at most with barely definable vertical lines: a particular shade of deepish red is best, but olive-green is equally effective: whites and yellows are

hopeless, and pinks only suitable for prints issued since 1820.

It has been very well said that if you want to know an individual you must spend ten days in a country-house with him or with her as the case may be, and in the same way there is no more infallible guide to the excellence or reverse of a print than to have it under close observation for a time in one's own house. It is curious to observe how some prints grow on one, and this is especially true of the masterly works of J. R. Smith: others, again, which may have attracted at first, fail to stand the test of intimacy. No one, of course, should attempt to combine in one room a variety of periods and styles. The mezzotints of the earlier masters up to 1770 should be kept apart from the works of the grand period 1770-1800; stipple work, whether plain or coloured, must be kept away from the mezzotints; and the French school demands a place by itself. Everything later than S. W. Reynolds must be regarded as modern: it cannot exist side by side with the grand productions of the old engravers, not even if the signature be that of Samuel Cousins himself. The first two works of this engraver which secured his reputation were his *Master Lambton* and *Lady Acland*: both are undeniably superb in proof state before the title. His *Lady Grey*, *Countess Gower*, and *Mrs Wolff* are also very fine indeed, and his *Lady Grosvenor* and *Nature good but overrated*. For the rest he is very uneven, and has

the misfortune to be also very hackneyed. I think that his first two works after Lawrence show the merit of his teaching by that fine artist S. W. Reynolds, and that a proof before letters of *Master Lambton* is the best print of the nineteenth century, and one of the most perfect things that money can buy, but that, on the whole, the relative position which Cousins holds in the sale-rooms is far too exalted.

The test of propinquity soon brings out a very important point—namely, what are the companionable prints and what the reverse. There can be no doubt whatever that the prints which attract and hold one's interest longest are the great mezzotint portraits of that period of giants, extending from somewhere about 1770 to 1800—that magic period of some thirty years which saw all, or nearly all, the best work done. The best portraits of this date are a real pleasure to live with, and it is the same for many contemporary subject pieces, not labelled portraits, such as *Walton's Fruit-Barrow* and *The Promenade at Carlisle House*, both engraved by J. R. Smith, and others one could name of the same character. These things are the aristocracy of this fascinating art, and any new-comers placed beside them are only admitted on sufferance until they are found to be worthy of their surroundings.

I have only one fault to find with mezzotints, and it is that many of them are too dark. Contrary to the practice of the line-engraver and the etcher,

the scraper of a mezzotint works from dark to light, and is often prone, out of sheer laziness, to leave large portions of his plate unworked or only lightly defined. There are, of course, many brilliant exceptions—Dean and J. R. Smith, for example, whose plates are generally bright and luminous throughout, constituting not the least of their great charm. Another point—rather a misfortune than a fault—is the absence of good examples of landscape in the works of the great engravers of the eighteenth century. That mezzotint is capable of adapting itself to the treatment of landscape is beyond a doubt; but, except here and there a Hobema or two, we have to be contented with those charming little glimpses that form the backgrounds of some of the great portraits, and these glimpses rather whet our appetite than satisfy it, making us regret that the talents of the Dutch and English schools of the period were so largely devoted to portraiture. True it is that mezzotint is peculiarly adapted to the delineation of flesh-tints, draperies, silks, satins, and all the delicate half-tones that make for so much in a fine portrait: at the same time, David Lucas's "English Landscape" series after Constable has shown us, at a later date, how well adapted the art is for the rendering of landscape, and these comparatively modern successes make one all the more keenly regret that a few men of the grand school, and S. W. Reynolds among the later mas-

ters, did not give us more evidence of their talents in this direction. Charming as the work of Lucas is when found in the earliest impressions, it is not absolutely perfection, having the defect of being surcharged with heavy blacks and deep shadows for the purpose of contrast with the high lights: such as it is, however, it is about the best thing in mezzotint landscape we possess, and comes next to the finest of Woollett's line work, which still retains its pride of place.

We are continually told by accomplished writers that the present price of old engravings is fictitious, and has been reached, by means of a skilfully engineered boom, by a ring of dealers. We are solemnly warned that a slump is impending, and that prices will soon give way and go down with a run. There are rings in all trades, but no one who knows much about salerooms will admit that the printsellers are disposed to force up the prices paid at auctions. Their action is rather in the other direction; and as they are practically the only, and in any case the chief, buyers at sales, it is manifestly not to their advantage to make the market too dear. I can see no signs whatever of an impending fall in prices; on the contrary, the omens are all the other way. Taste and the means of education, research, and comparison are greatly superior to what they were, and if fashion still neglects many fine prints and exaggerates the value of others, it has on the whole fairly decided at last upon the beautiful

and valuable things, and the prices of these will continue to steadily rise. Old books, old pictures, tapestries, curios, furniture, china, and bric-a-brac of all kinds increase in value year by year. It is a simple matter of supply and demand. Every year the supply decreases, and more fine things get locked up in the collections of rich men or in those cold tombs the museums. Every year more buyers come forward and the demand increases: it is the rise in prices alone that tempts all but executors to part with their treasures. There has been a marked decrease in the quality of prints offered for sale during the season which closed in July last: the names often sounded well, but the engravings themselves often proved most disappointing. Foreign collectors in all countries have thoroughly recognised the artistic merits of the early English school of engraving, and their buyers are busy in the field: at sales abroad the prices rule higher than they do in England, a good test of the justice of the complaint made against our printsellers. For the moment, Boston and Chicago millionaires hardly distinguish between mezzotint and photogravure, but example is contagious. Mr Morgan and other rich Americans are collecting on a grand scale, and once the practice of buying prints by the yard and Caxtons by the hundredweight becomes generalised in the States, the Americans will raise the prices both of prints and of books to famine point.

Had "print states" been numbered consecutively by the old publishers we should now have graduated prices and some means of fixing approximate values from year to year: as matters stand, it is almost impossible to fix the money value of a good old engraving. The general public lumps together all print states as of equal value, whether the work is palpably one struck off just after the proofs or when the plate was worn out.

The highest art in print-collecting is the faculty of recognising and securing early and brilliant print impressions, which differ hardly at all from the proofs themselves. A constant source of disappointment is the belief that because one print has fetched so much at auction another of the same subject, and apparently identical in "state," size, and description, will realise the same figure. Sale prices taken by themselves are absolutely meaningless unless the collector has himself seen the print sold and taken note of its condition. It may be a good impression or a bad one; it may be rubbed, creased, torn, harmed by a fault in printing, worm-eaten, restored, badly cleaned, or bleached beyond recognition; it may have been cut down so that the plate-mark is lost or the whole subject not given; it may be "laid down" on cardboard, touched up or strengthened; it may have uncut margins or no margin at all; and the inscription may be complete or partly wanting, or pasted on. None of these points are mentioned

in a list of sale prices, and yet every one affects the value. Even with all faults and blemishes it may become a bone of contention for two amateurs who may have left unlimited commissions for its purchase, and the price may mount up to many times the value of the print. Old engravings are not like candles, all equal of their sort and saleable at so much a dozen: they vary as widely as the price of yearlings at Newmarket sales, and generally for far better reasons. Engravings have one great pull over oils: it is that, given equal care, the print will preserve its freshness and life when the picture is a ghost of its former self. Prints also preserve for us the faithful record of great works lost or destroyed, such, for instance, as Reynolds's great portrait of the Duchess of Rutland, burnt at Belvoir in 1816.

As a hobby, print-collecting is to my mind one of the most fascinating of pursuits, allowing endless scope for interesting study, judgment, decision, and independence of opinion. The print-collector adorns and beautifies his house with his treasures, surrounding himself with the portraits of famous men and women whose names have made history, with the scenes of great events, the truthful record of the daily and domestic life of all classes, the heroic and the commonplace side by side, and all explanatory of their time. Here is a famous duchess, Georgiana of Devonshire; there Polly Kennedy, the not less queenly and dignified demi-mondaine who won

such a tribute of admiration from Reynolds—"the face has more grace and dignity than anything I have ever done." Here is the strong and manly face of David Garrick; and farther on the portrait of an even greater actor on a larger stage, Appiani's Bonaparte, surrounded by Whitworth, Castlereagh, Pitt, Nelson, and others intimately connected with the history of the great war. Here again is the salon at Carlisle House, with portraits of many famous men and women; there, a lifelike scene from a back-slum in Chelsea; mothers and their children after Lawrence, Romney's idealisations of his imperishable model, Gainsborough shepherdesses, Hoppner beauties, princes and ploughboys, duchesses and dairymaids, scenes and idylls and costumes from the everyday life in all classes of a great and a rising people. It is not possible to surround oneself with a similar record of any age or time, and these beautiful things—for even the commonplace are beautiful—breathe life and meaning into history as one reads it, and explain many things, many great actions, many failings, many crimes, as no memoir and no history can ever possibly do for us. The alliance of history and prints is a natural union: with the two together the past is no longer a sealed book—it lives! Not that the French school should be neglected. On the contrary, it is eminently artistic and pleasing, and represents such radically different ways of thought and means

of expressing them that it clashes in no way with our own fine school, and rather serves as the natural pendant to it. Greuze, Fragonard, Debucourt, Lavreince, St Aubin, Janinet, Freudeberg, Moreau le Jeune, and many others, have left us a delightful record in its way of the age they lived in, more particularly in the detail of costume and in the representation of interiors. But here art comes first and nature limps along with halting steps almost out of sight: the manliness, fidelity to life, and breadth of treatment of the English school are wanting: we tire *à la fin des fins* even of Greuze's prettiness and Fragonard's sham pastorals, and are mainly attracted by the remarkable technique and delicate work of the best of the French engravers.

Cavillers are always ready to remark that engraving is only an imitative faculty and does not represent original work. In a sense this is true; but, on the other hand, how many painters would have been condemned to oblivion but for the faithful yet independent and brilliant art of the engravers? Take an original drawing of the period and compare it with the engraving, say, by J. R. Smith. Who can deny that Smith at least—and he did not stand alone—was an artist in the truest and best sense, conveying with fidelity the whole life and meaning of the picture, and yet placing the indelible impress of his own artistic temperament upon his task, making the print a true work of art, one too

which remains to-day as full of life, subtlety, and colour as though fresh drawn from the plate, while the drawing has faded to an almost lifeless and monotonous daub.

Two things can hardly fail to strike a collector of fine prints of the early English school. The first is the recollection that the years 1770-1815 synchronised with the fiercest wars and most violent political commotions of our modern history, yet that there is hardly a sign or echo of war or tumult in the artistic record of the age. Hardly a tragedy, here and there a battlepiece, but never a sign of national passion: pathos, yes; but while the tempests raged outside the artists pursued the even tenor of their way, secure in their island fastness, as though murder and sudden death, defeats, rebellions, and treacheries were things that did not exist. And the second point is that all this great galaxy of talent, this consummate good taste and almost perfect sense of the beautiful and dignified in art, sprang exclusively from the lower classes of provincial England. Except Peters and Wilson, Lavinia Bingham and Lady Diana Beauclerk,—the two latter, thanks to the engravings of Gillray and Tomkins,—hardly a single man or woman of gentle birth contributed a jot to the revival which brought to British art such universal, well-merited, and undying fame. Let rich men and social magnates recall the fact that it is almost exclusively as patrons that a few gentlefolk have

succeeded in entwining their names with the immortals. Admiral Keppel by taking Reynolds to Italy as his guest; Sir George Beaumont by aiding Constable; Sir Thomas Dyke Acland by recognising the merit of Samuel Cousins and furthering his career. These and other patrons will be remembered so long as the story of British art is told, thanks to acts of generosity which may have appeared to them at the time as scarcely deserving of mention in their diaries.

Whether we take the artists who designed or the engravers who translated and popularised their works with such fine art and superb technique, we find that nine-tenths from first to last were not only self-made but for the greater part self-taught. Reynolds, whose father was teacher in a small grammar-school; Gainsborough, son of a clothier; Lawrence and Woollett, sons of publicans; Hoppner, the Whitechapel choir-boy; Constable, the handsome miller; Romney, one of eleven children of a cabinet-maker; Morland, son of a bankrupt picture-dealer; Wheatley, a tailor's son,—all these and

many others started in life and practised for long under conditions which seemed ill-calculated to promise the brilliant results which one and all achieved. It was a popular movement, and it was native genius that triumphed in nature study, expressing itself in the highest terms of art. I know nothing to equal it, unless it be the success in other paths of glory that the sons of hairdressers, bandits, and smugglers were winning under the First Empire at the same moment for the future marshals of France.

To-day the devotees of art are drawn from all classes, and we see them leave our shores in throngs to study in Paris, Rome, Berlin,—here, there, and everywhere save in our own fields and lanes and cities, which provided adequate inspiration for our great masters. Yet all this forced hatching of art by foreign incubation has not given us a Reynolds, a Gainsborough, or a Romney, and until nature study occupies a higher place in the world of art I am disposed to think it never will.

THE STORY OF JOSÉ RIZAL THE FILIPINO.¹

A FRAGMENT OF RECENT ASIATIC HISTORY.

BY HUGH CLIFFORD, C.M.G.

"Je meurs sans voir l'aurore briller sur ma patrie! Vous, qui la verrez, saluez-la! N'oubliez pas ceux qui sont tombés pendant la nuit!"—NOLI ME TANGERE.

AFTER more than three centuries of Spanish rule and of Christianity the natives of the Philippines, true to the nature of the Malayan race to which they belong, had preserved all their vices, all their characteristic limitations and ineptitudes, intact. They knew just enough to be aware that they were ill governed; but the philosophical patience, the inborn fatalism of their breed, asserted itself, and caused them, melancholy and unresisting, to endure the patently unendurable. Their superstitions, their inertia, their want of continuity of purpose, their inability to combine, their feebleness of resolve, held them spellbound, while their lack of education made them pathetically inarticulate. Now and again, maddened by a sense of gross injustice, some of them rose in abortive rebellion against their Spanish masters, displaying, ere the heavy hand of the white men fell upon and crushed them, all the savage inconsequence of the *ámok*-runner and the stupid wantonness of an angry child. Yet from the helpless mass of this people—impotent, suffering, and dumb—on a sudden

there emerged a man who not only could see through their eyes, feel with and for them, suffer every pang that wrung their hearts, but who also was gifted with a voice wherewith to speak in such fashion that men should not chose but hear him.

This man, José Rizal, the son of full-blooded Filipino parents, was born at Calamba on the island of Luzon in 1861. His parents were able to afford the boy an education altogether superior to that which fell usually to the lot of a Filipino; but though thus far fate favoured him, it was his own gifts and no mere fortuitous circumstances that made him stand forth, conspicuous and alone, as the one Malayan who has ever displayed commanding ability. Standing thus isolated, this brown man with the sensitive brown man's heart, yet with the logical mind and power of utterance that belong to the European, it must be confessed that he is to be regarded as a "freak"—an abnormal development in no sense typical of his people; but through all, and in spite of all, José Rizal was a Filipino of the Filipinos,

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differing from his fellows only in that he possessed the intellect to formulate and the energy to voice their inarticulate thoughts.

José was educated in Manila by the Jesuits; and since all schoolboys are partisans, and love is ever fringed with hate, it may be supposed that he imbibed from his early teachers something of the hostility towards the monastic orders of which he subsequently made so uncompromising a display. Compared with the Friars the Jesuits were late-comers in the Philippines, and a far from edifying rivalry subsisted between the two classes of priests. The former, however, triumphed; and at one time the Jesuits were actually expelled from the islands, and when they were at length permitted to return it was on the condition that they abstained from all interference in local politics. With their ambitions thus restricted, these disciples of St Ignatius Loyola devoted themselves to learning, science, and education. They made the observatory of Manila a place of world-wide celebrity; within certain limits they encouraged knowledge, and sought to spread it broadcast among the people. Writing of them at a later date, Rizal mentions, as a proof of how woefully the islands lagged behind the age, that while in Europe the Jesuits ranked as reactionaries, they here were regarded by the clerical party as dangerously advanced and revolutionary in their aims and opinions.

From the beginning, then,

José obtained the best education that his native land could afford; but in 1882, shortly after completing his twentieth year, he was sent to Madrid, there to study for the profession of medicine.

At the Spanish capital he speedily distinguished himself—taking his degrees, as a doctor of medicine and as a licentiate of philosophy and literature, with ease and credit. These preliminaries accomplished, José travelled extensively in Europe—spending periods of various length in Paris, Berlin, Brussels, London, and Rome, making long tours among the lakes and mountains of Switzerland and in the historic valley of the Rhine. By virtue of his birth he was bilingual from infancy, speaking Spanish and his native Tagal as a matter of course. Ere ever he set foot in Europe he was already well grounded in the classics, and had also acquired a considerable knowledge of the Japanese language and literature. At Madrid he perfected his acquaintance with Latin and Greek, and picked up a certain amount of Hebrew. After taking his degrees he quickly mastered French, German, English, and Italian. He feasted with insatiable appetite and delight upon the glorious literatures thus thrown open to him; and that he did not content himself with a mere smattering knowledge of these tongues is proved by the fact that the treatise on the Tagal language, with the composition of which he afterwards solaced his captivity,

was written in English—unquestionably the most difficult of the modern forms of speech which he had acquired.

These things may fairly be regarded as respectable achievements, more especially when it is remembered from a folk of what enfeebled stock Rizal had sprung; but the force of his character and the strength of his mental armoury are best instanced by the fact that he never suffered himself to become denationalised through long contact with men of a sturdier stock. Studying the history, the institutions, and the peoples of Europe with sympathy, understanding, and enthusiastic admiration, imbibing with avidity modern ideas on matters social, political, and economic, daily extending his knowledge in half-a-hundred different directions, enlarging his views and heightening his ideals, he continued to regard all as a means to a definite end—the improvement of the sorry lot of his countrymen in those distant islands of Asia. In all his wanderings through places great in story—the civic battlefields of Europe, where men have striven and died for liberty—the thought of his island home, and of the brown folk, his kindred, melancholy, ignorant, and sore oppressed, was with him sleeping and waking. Perhaps in these flawless days, ere ever disillusionment had touched him, he looked out upon the world through the very sanguine eyes of youth, saw himself set apart as the future liberator of his country-

men, and was thrilled by the joy of certain victory. His pride was wounded by the complete ignorance that prevailed concerning the Philippines, but he never doubted that when Europe, and, above all, when Spain, should learn the things which he had to tell, the white nations' innate love of justice would work the miracle of reformation for which he was hungering. I like to think of the José Rizal of those days, overflowing with hope, energy, and love of his kind, dreaming great dreams that then seemed to him so easy of realisation, and arming himself for the battle with such faith in the triumph which awaited him, and so joyful a confidence in his own powers. It is good to dwell upon the thought of this time, and to remember that even to this man of many sorrows the priceless treasure of happiness was for a little space vouchsafed.

At last, after a sojourn of some three years in Europe, Rizal felt that the term of his probation was ended, and that the hour had arrived in which his crusade should begin. Therefore he sate him down and wrote a novel illustrative of life in the Philippines, which, in its original Spanish form, appeared in 1886. He called it '*Noli Me Tangere*,' and explained the significance of the title in the following dedication:—

"To My Country.

"The history of human suffering reveals the existence of a cancer the character of which is such that the slightest contact irritates it and causes

the most acute agony. On every occasion when, in the midst of modern civilisation, I have desired to recall thy dear image, either for the purpose of solacing myself with my memories of thee, or of comparing thee to other countries, it has ever seemed to me to be devoured by a hideous social cancer.

"Longing for thy health, which is our happiness, and seeking the best remedies for thy sufferings, I will do with thee what the ancients were wont to do with their sick: they exposed them upon the steps of the temple, so that all who came thither to adore their God might suggest a remedy.

"Also I will endeavour to describe thy condition faithfully, without extenuating anything: I will lift a corner of the veil that conceals thy maladies, sacrificing everything to truth,—even my love of thy glory,—but, as becomes thy son, loving passionately even thy vices and weaknesses."

Such was the spirit, and such the object, with which José Rizal the Filipino set about the task of writing, in the white man's speech, the tale to which, he dreamed, all Europe would hearken. His was indeed the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and the sound of his strongest note died away faintly in the vast empty spaces, or was drowned by the tumult of the great busy world—a world that is more pre-occupied than heartless.

The tragedy and the pathos of Rizal's own story has cast something of a glamour over his literary work, to the confusion and bedazzlement of his critics. He has been proclaimed as a genius: 'Noli Me Tangere' and its successor, 'Il Filibustero,' have been made the subject of almost hysterical praise; and quite recently a writer, who is

usually a model of sanity and self-restraint, has committed himself to the statement that "the palpitating life in these stories can only be equalled in the best literature of other lands." The fact is that Rizal was a genius, not because he produced works of genius, but because, like Tennyson's "divinely gifted man," he "burst his birth's invidious bars"; and indeed it is barely possible to form a completely sane estimate of the value of his books as literature, so strong is the bias of wonder that their author should have been a scion of the Malayan race.

To me, after reading much that Rizal wrote with interest and sympathy, it seems that his novels are to be regarded, not as works of fiction, but as supremely able political pamphlets. He writes well, fluently, with point, occasionally with finish; he has at his command a certain grim humour; but he lacks all power of construction, he can neither conceive nor depict a character that lives, as live, for instance, the characters of Scott or Thackeray, or even Trollope, and, like the little girl in the nursery rhyme, his people, "when they are good, are very, very good, and when they are bad they are *horrid*." On the other hand, he knows and loves the Philippines and the Filipinos; he describes the lives of the people with detail, truth, and picturesqueness; and he has sufficient of skill and power to excite the interest of his readers in his impeachment of Spanish rule, and to quicken their sympathies

for the brown folk who groaned beneath that tyranny.

An appreciation of the precise nature of this indictment is essential to the right understanding of Rizal's subsequent history. His novels represent the alpha and omega of his achievement: they were at once the glory and the pride of those who hailed him as their prophet, and the crown of his offending in the sight of the men who regarded him as a dangerous firebrand. One must not only examine the books themselves, but must recognise what their publication meant to the bulk of educated Filipinos, and to the authorities that governed them. And here judgment must be aided by an impartiality at once dispassionate and critical, for the glamour which tragedy has cast over Rizal and all his ways and works has blinded his biographers, and has made of them, not sane historians, but fierce partisans.

His charges divide themselves naturally into two categories: those which affect the civil authorities, and those which are levelled against the clerical party. With regard to the former, he maintained that the officials on the spot had certain vested interests which induced them to perpetuate abuses; that their power was such that they could easily get rid of a governor-general who sought to institute reform, and that as human nature is what it is, and as the holder of this office was always totally ignorant of the country and had paid heavily for his post, his

most generous impulses were doomed to early abandonment. The remainder of the Spanish *personnel*, the majority of whom were connected with the Government service, are thus described by Rizal in a single brief paragraph:—

"The Spaniards who come to the Philippines are unfortunately not always what they should be. Continual changes, the demoralisation of the governing class, favouritism, the low cost of passages, and the rapidity with which the voyage can be made, are the causes of all the evil; hither come all the broken men of Spain; if some of them be good the country quickly corrupts them."

All minor posts were openly bought and sold; every Spanish "dead-beat" who chose to cast up on the islands claimed to be provided for at the expense of the State—that is, of the natives—as a matter of right; an official who showed sympathy with the Filipinos, as against his own countrymen, speedily fell upon troublous times. The cutting of the Suez Canal did much to stimulate the immigration of undesirable Spaniards, and Rizal represents a pauper of this description as being permitted to practise medicine openly, though his only qualification lay in the fact that he had been employed in sweeping out an infirmary.

"Leave him alone," the authorities are represented as saying to a doctor who protested against this abuse. "Let him make his little pile, and, when he has got together six or seven thousand *pesos*, he will return to his own country, and live there in peace. How can it injure you if he does fool these excellent dupes of Indians? Why aren't they sharper?

He is a poor devil : do not take the bread out of his mouth. *Prove yourself a good Spaniard!*"

The incident itself may or may not be true, but it is none the less typical, while the naïve cynicism of the words which I have italicised neatly epitomises the attitude of mind of the Spaniards generally with regard to the subject race.

Rizal has much to say also on the subject of the *Guardia Civil*. This armed police force, recruited from the native population and officered by Spaniards, was organised in 1867 for the protection of the towns and *pueblos*, and for the suppression of outlawry and brigandage. It is notorious throughout the East that native police require constant and jealous supervision by Europeans of high character, if they are not to become a machine for the perpetration of worse abuses than those which they are designed to control. In British India itself, and in our other Asiatic possessions, our name is sold for a song, all too frequently, by the Orientals who serve us, in spite of the fact that ours is a system which imposes all manner of checks and counter-checks. In the Philippines, therefore, the Spanish officials being what they were, there is small room for wonder that the *Guardia Civil* speedily became a scourge to the natives of the islands. Their persons were held sacred by the authorities; in the courts their testimony was accepted as conclusive evidence of the guilt of those whom they accused; they owed their places in the

ranks to favouritism or to purchase, and they used them for their own enrichment or for the satisfaction of their lawless desires and lusts. Their officers, bent upon amassing small fortunes for themselves, had no wish, even if they had enough of energy, to control their men. Accordingly it is said of the *Guardia* that their oppression of the people made more outlaws and bandits than ever their zeal for the public safety laid by the leg. Rizal illustrates their methods by showing us half-a-dozen of the *Guardia* calmly threatening to open fire upon a party of picnickers, since they wished to effect the arrest of a servant whom they believed to have taken refuge with the merry-makers. He tells us of an officer firing five chambers of his revolver at a native who had frightened his horse and upset him into the mud. When, in 'Noli Me Tangere,' two policemen visit the hut of a peasant woman on duty, they are represented as robbing her hen-coop as a matter of course. In one horrible scene in the same book Rizal gives us a picture of a number of the *Guardia*, officers as well as men, torturing some rioters whom they have captured in order to extort confessions which shall incriminate their associates. Some readers will be inclined to doubt the accuracy of this latter charge, but alas! up to the very hour of the final exodus, many cruel practices, which seemingly are so dear to the Spanish heart, were almost openly made use

of in the Philippines, and were certainly connived at by the authorities.

Rizal has further something to say on the subject of certain questionable methods whereby revenue was raised at the expense of public morality. The Filipinos are passionately devoted to cock-fighting, and the sport is made the occasion of extravagant betting. The Spaniards, being a people who have clung to their bull-rings in the face of the public opinion of Europe, can hardly be blamed perhaps for neglecting to interfere with the national sport of the Filipinos on the grounds of its inhumanity; but not content with giving it passive countenance, the Government claimed a tenth on all the *stakes*, thus deriving a direct revenue from the vice which, more than aught else, it is said, contributed to the moral ruin and the material impoverishment of the native peasantry. Moreover, the Government of the Philippines organised the Manila State Lotteries, which set the best half of the Far East gambling furiously, in spite of the efforts of our own authorities to prevent the sale of tickets upon British soil.

The Philippines, Rizal was never tired of declaring, were full three centuries behind the age, and for this he rightly blamed the governing caste. In those Asiatic lands which are administered by white men the rulers must ever be greatly in advance of the bulk of the commonalty, and, alas! the methods of the Spaniards were those of a people not wholly

emerged from barbarism. One fact in illustration and confirmation of this statement will suffice. Filipino lepers were not segregated, nor were they afforded any material medical assistance by the State. They were not suffered to live in the *pueblos*, being forced to build huts for themselves beyond the village limits; but no provision was made for their support, and these unhappy folk roamed at large begging, and picking up such meagre doles as might be cast to them by the charitable. If in a moment of forgetfulness one of them broke any of the rules which hedged him about, —if he touched aught belonging to one who was whole, if he approached too near to his sound neighbours, if, maddened with misery and hunger, he stole, or committed any other misdemeanour,—the law punished him without mercy, and that punishment was by flogging! Think of it—a leper flogged! Could I cite any fact better calculated to bring home to the average Englishman a perception of the stupid callousness and inhumanity which, during the closing years of the nineteenth century, disfigured the rule of Spain in her Eastern colonies?

It was greed that in the beginning beckoned us forth into the new lands; but since then time has sped onward, and has brought to us purer ideals and higher conceptions of the end of the white man's being. Wherefore nothing can be held to excuse the failure of the Spaniards to understand the fact that the presence of Euro-

peans in Asia, as a ruling caste, calls for some justification, and carries with it certain duties and responsibilities towards the subject peoples. A generous recognition of this principle, and an altruistic interpretation put upon the nature of those sacrifices which such recognition entails, are the only sure base upon which the rule of the alien in Asia can securely rest: when a government and its servants become blinded to this great truth, their downfall cannot be long delayed.

But in the eyes of Rizal, and of many others, though the civil administration was rotten to the core, it was the clerical party which did more than aught else to shore up an outworn system, to perpetuate abuses, and to retard reform. It must be remembered that the conquest of the islands was effected, not by the Spanish knights who followed Legaspi to Luzon, but by the dauntless friars—each one of whom, the saying went, was worth a battalion to Spain—who laboured strenuously, giving and taking hard knocks with the best when such things were going, but conquering for the most part by the sheer force of their exalted faith, their large charity, their quenchless enthusiasm, and their splendid self-forgetfulness. Theirs is a glowing page in the stirring history of missionary endeavour, and very romantic are the figures of these lonely men wrestling bravely in the wilderness against all the forces of Apollyon, and claiming a sure victory in the name of the

Master they served so faithfully. But, alas! time works with bitter irony, and while the centuries rolled onward, and the world advanced, the friars of the Philippines, whose fore-runners of old had kindled the torch of learning in a land of darkest ignorance, not only failed to keep step with their age, but lost also the very characteristics which had made so glorious those heroes of an earlier time. Once in this raw wilderness they had been the champions of new things, the elevators of a barbarous people, the heralds of an ampler day; now they had become haters of all innovation, reactionaries who threw themselves fiercely at progress's Juggernaut-car, and strove to clog its mighty wheels. Once, poor, friendless, and alone, the friars had gone forth into a wild land, there to wage a great fight for Christ's sake; now, wealth, permanency of appointment, and a ubiquitous representation throughout the country in the person of the parish priests, had gradually transformed the clerical party into a political force which nothing could withstand. In the beginning the influence of the friars with Spaniard and Filipino alike had been due to their utter unselfishness, and had been used by them for the good of the community alone; but imperceptibly and by slow degrees the civil and religious administration of the Philippines had become not so much welded into one as inextricably entangled, and the clerical party, wedded by training and tradition to the old

order of things, had learned to regard all agitation for reform as an assault directed, not against a mere mundane political system, but against the Church of God herself.

It is easy enough to scoff at a pretension so preposterous, but try for a moment to look at the matter from the point of view of the clerics. Since things political and religious in the Philippines had come now to owe their vitality to the same force, and were so closely identified the one with the other, it needed a man of unusually clear vision and impartial cast of mind to differentiate between them. Such qualities are not commonly developed by the *esprit de corps* which animates a regiment,—be it military or monastic,—and men must be supremely impersonal, detached, and altruistic ere they can bring themselves to realise that the world will be the better for the elimination of the system for which they stand. It has been very generally assumed by writers on the subject that the clerical party was here animated solely by ignoble motives and unworthy temporal ambitions. Admitting to the full the stupidity, the ineptitude, and the tyranny of its rule, and being in nowise concerned to defend what I regard as indefensible, it yet seems to me that the action of the clerics in supporting the rotten Spanish administration, and fighting for it to the last, is capable of an explanation somewhat less discreditable

than that commonly accepted, when once the extent to which the religious question had become interwoven with those raised by political issues is appreciated.

Briefly, the attitude of the ecclesiastics was this. They regarded the Filipinos as an inferior people, easily seduced by the devil (as in sober truth are all Malayan folk)—“brethren of the water-buffalo,” as a monk once called them, who must have their lives ordered carefully for them in this world, if they would win to the eternal kingdom. Any attempt to overturn the civil government could not but materially weaken the spiritual power, which, alas! had come to be its very marrow. Therefore all reformers were, of necessity, “irreligious.” The priests saw that if “the brother of the water-buffalo” were fed with the *gram* of learning he was apt to wax “beany,” and to kick, instead of humbly bowing his neck to the yoke as a beast of burden should do. Wherefore, as the schools were in their hands, every precaution was taken to withhold too liberal a supply of the heating food. And the pity and the irony of it all lay in the fact that these men were the successors of those very friars who had done such magnificent work in the islands in ancient times, who had been at once the apostles of learning and the champions of the native races! Cry out against the hideous wrong-headedness of it all, an’ you will; mourn over the miserable limitations of human agents, whose perverse in-

genuity is capable of converting the most splendid enterprises into failures so woeful; but do not deny to these unhappy men the sorry excuse of sincerity for all the evil that they wrought!

The clerical party, then, having been placed, more by circumstances than by individual design, in a position radically false, and failing utterly to understand that such was the case, it followed that little by little they sought to exercise in temporal affairs that unquestioned authority which Roman Catholics regard as vested in the priestly office in matters relating to faith or morals. In so doing they were patently exceeding their powers and courting rebuffs, while their action in branding the widespread discontent excited by an oppressive civil administration as "irreligious," inflicted a terrible injury upon the very Church which it was their desire to serve.

There were other issues also concerning which the clerical party came into acute conflict with the Filipinos. In the course of centuries, by purchase, gift, and legacy, many of the richest lands had passed into the possession of the successors of the empty-handed friars, so that in a huge number of parishes the monastic orders were the principal landlords. Now, as every Government servant knows, it is far more easy to be grasping and hard of heart on behalf of an impersonal corporation than it is in matters where one's own individual interests are alone

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at stake; and accordingly the Church speedily earned, and deserved, the reputation of being a merciless landlord. The peasants grew to regard the rents paid for Church lands as a cruel tax—one of the many exacted by the civil administration, by whose aid it was frequently collected from recalcitrant tenants. On the other hand, the clerical party looked upon their wealth as a necessary weapon in the struggle which was pending with the "irreligious" advocates of political reform, and no man among them seems to have been sufficiently far-seeing to recognise that the splendid edifice, which the self-sacrificing friars of old had builded upon the affections of the people, must totter to its fall now that it had been transformed into a crushing burden that ground the natives into an abject poverty. And indeed the want of foresight—the lack of all right understanding of the essential elements of the problem with which the changing years had confronted them—was fatally mischievous to the cause which the clerical party had at heart. "You cannot serve God and Mammon!"—but in the Philippines the things that were God's and the things that were of Mammon had been suffered to get bewilderingly inter-ravelled, and the priests were now engaged in the futile task of trying to do that which Christ Himself had declared to be for ever impossible.

The intellectual condition of the natives can be better im-

aged than described. In the schools they were made to learn whole volumes by heart, of which, since they were written in Spanish, they did not understand a single word. The rod, Rizal assures us, was regarded as by far the most efficient instrument of education by the parents, who declined to send their children to school unless they were frequently and soundly flogged. The ignorance of the clergy themselves was also scandalous, and this fact need hardly be insisted upon, else surely it would have been appreciated that a system which, in its time, had been an immense advance upon no education at all, was hopelessly inadequate and inefficient at the end of the nineteenth century. In one of his novels Rizal speaks with bitter derision of the "little plays," acted in the *conventos* on certain feast-days, as the most violent concessions to the spirit of modern enlightenment which the friars could bring themselves to make. But the cutting of the Suez Canal, which had opened the door to so many worthless Spaniards, and had ended the long isolation of the islands, enabled a few Filipinos to seek a proper education in Europe, and every one of these returned to raise wrathful cries of protest against the bondage of benighted ignorance in which his countrymen were held. And thus the natives were made conscious of yet another grievance against the clerical party.

But, as a whole, the Filipinos were dumb—pathetically dumb. The press was ruth-

lessly muzzled, the fiscal revising, deleting, and *inserting* with merciless censorship; the people were superstitious and ignorant beyond belief; they had degraded Christianity into a pantheistic idolatry, and their religious creed had no sort of influence upon their conduct. They were inert, sullen, resentful, but cowed; they were in abject dread of laying themselves open to the accusation of disaffection towards the Government which they hated; they were afraid to possess books, since such things were suspect, and they made haste to burn their libraries at the first whisper of danger. All this Rizal brings out strongly in his novels. He observes his kindred with a pitying eye and marks their misery and their discontent. He shows them to us wasting their substance upon childish fêtes and reckless gambling, seeking in such sorry distractions the forgetfulness that they may not find. But he sees, or pretends to see, that the hour of awakening is near at hand.

"Without liberty there is no light!" he cried. "You say you know little of your country, and I believe it. You do not see the struggle that is imminent, you do not see the storm-clouds on the horizon; the battle has already begun in the sphere of ideas, whence it will descend into an arena that shall be stained with blood!"

"Do you not see how all things awake? The slumber has endured for centuries, but one day the thunderbolt will fall, and the bolt, instead of destroying, will be the herald of life? It is for this that new tendencies awake in our minds, it is for this that those tendencies, separated to-day, will unite under God's guidance. God has not failed other

peoples. He will not fail us. His cause is the cause of liberty!"

A fine mixture of metaphors certainly, such as, in spite of Hamlet's famous speech, should hardly find a place in the "best literature" of any land; but the meaning is clear, and it was the clarion note, sounded to an oppressed race in passages such as this, which made of José Rizal the Filipino a prophet among his own people, and the hated foe of those who sought to still the popular outcry for reform.

Of Rizal himself, and of his personal attitude towards religious and political questions, his books supply some interesting indications. In spite of his long association with the scholars of Europe, his own sturdy faith in the religion in which he had been bred does not seem to have been shaken. While waging fierce war against the priests of the Philippines, because they stood for the perpetuation of the abuses which he hated, he none the less remained a Roman Catholic.

"I am a Catholic," he writes; "I keep the faith of my fathers in all its purity; but I do not see why I should bow my head when I can hold it erect, nor why I should deliver myself up to my enemies when I am able to fight them."

The superstitious practices of his countrymen filled him with a scorn which he was at no pains to conceal, but throughout his books the consolation which religion alone can afford in the hour of trial, and of the elevating effects which its great truths have upon the mind of man, makes itself felt with all

the force of a deep sincerity. Moreover, he bids the Filipinos remember the enormous debt which they owe to the friars, who were the first to bring to them the light of Christianity; he insists upon the fact that the ignorance, selfishness, and crimes of her agents and representatives are excrescences of human growth, and have nought to do with the Church herself; but he adds that gratitude for ancient obligations must not be suffered to blind the men of to-day to the evils which the influence of the friars was being exercised to sustain.

Similarly, while inveighing mightily against Spanish misrule, Rizal proclaims aloud his loyalty to Spain.

"Is it, then, impossible to reconcile the love of one's country with the love of Spain?" he asks. "I love my country because I owe her my life and my happiness, because all men must love their fatherland: I love Spain because, in spite of all, the Philippines owe her, and will owe her, their happiness and their future."

And in another place he writes:—

"My greatest desire is the happiness of my country,—happiness which I wish her to owe to Spain, and to the efforts of her citizens, united to Spain and to one another by the eternal bonds of common views and common interests."

And once again, while dwelling on his loyalty to the mother country, he whispers to her a word of warning:—

"The Philippines do not think of separating themselves from the mother country: they ask only for a little liberty, justice, and love. You are mistaken if, seeing all things dark, you think that our country is

desperate. It suffers; yes, but it still hopes, it believes: it will not rise until it has quite lost patience."

We have now completed our brief examination of Rizal's books—the books whereby he was subsequently judged by the men responsible for the administration of the Philippines. The accuracy of his facts, though he wrote of necessity as a partisan, has never been impugned, and the attitude of mind revealed by the expression of his opinions appears to me to bear witness to the extraordinary quality of the man himself. Come of a plastic folk, he yet succeeded in maintaining his racial identity intact amid the alien civilisations of Europe; his religion remained untouched by the spirit of modern scepticism; but, more wonderful still, this most anomalous of Asiatics was at once just and essentially moderate. Belonging to an oriental people, who are passionate and impulsive, and as a rule can see no step between an abstract ideal and a blood-stained attempt to attain to it, Rizal persistently counselled legitimate agitation as the only line of action whereby the much-needed reforms might be secured. Deeply imbued with the love of liberty, no suggestion is to be found in his writings that aught can compensate for the horrors of an armed insurrection. Had José Rizal been the leader of his people after the Spanish-American war, his influence might perhaps have served to avert the miserable strife which has been a national calamity to his countrymen, and is as futile as it is insensate.

Yet Rizal's O'Connell-like attitude found scant favour with the authorities in the Philippines. The clerical party caused his books to be publicly burned, in quite the approved medieval fashion, and their author was branded by them as a heretic and a *filibustero*.

"To pass for a heretic is always bad," Rizal had once written, "but to be known as a *filibustero* (i.e., one who by peaceful or warlike means attempts to alter the existing order of things) is still worse. It were better far to have upon one's conscience the murder of three tax-gatherers, every one of whom possessed the rare knowledge of how to read and write!"

As we shall see, the sequel proved that he had by no means overestimated the gravity of the situation.

The publication of 'Noli Me Tangere' had left Europe cold—that great unwieldy entity is not lightly to be heated into a ferment of excitement; but in spite of all precautions, the book was widely read in the Philippines. When Rizal returned to Manila in 1887, he was greeted as a popular hero. The prudently inclined gave him a wide berth; the reckless, youthful, and advanced sections of the community hailed him with enthusiasm as their natural leader; the Government regarded him as a dangerous revolutionary; while the clerical party, viewing him as the incarnation of the unspeakable turpitude of the native population, believed that the devil had entered into possession of this "brother of the water-buffalo" for the purpose of doing battle with the Church of God. Very

soon, therefore, though Rizal seems never to have abandoned his attitude of moderation, he found it prudent to seek safety in flight.

In February 1888 he set sail for Japan, whence he proceeded at a leisurely pace to Europe, making some stay in the United States. He took up his residence in London, and became known to a small circle of scholars and in the reading-room of the British Museum; but he had left his heart behind him in the keeping of the brown men of his own breed, and a gnawing nostalgia made him restless and unhappy. His early illusions had long ere this been stripped from him. He found himself surrounded by selfishness and indifferentism. He had fought and failed; his great dream had come to nought. He had raised his voice fearlessly, and had shouted his message in the ears of Europe; but Europe was huge, pre-occupied, self-absorbed, deaf to the cause he pleaded. On her horizon the woes of the land he loved were but a tiny speck. In melancholy exile he realised at last his own utter impotence, and the bitter truth that if deliverance were to be wrought for the Filipinos it must be by the unaided efforts of the people themselves.

But in the meantime the spirit of discontent and unrest, of which Rizal had early detected the signs, was growing with alarming rapidity. The clerics, true to their *idée fixe*, attributed it to the spread of "irreligion," and, confounding effect with cause, believed it to

be in a great measure due to the evil influence of Rizal's books. But, though disaffection was rife, the people lacked the unifying instinct of nationality, without which there can be no combined action of an effective kind. In many places furious, ill-managed spurts of rebellion burst forth, only to be ruthlessly repressed; for these outbreaks were sporadic, drew their inspiration from no central organisation, and so fizzled out ignominiously in bloodshed, suffering, and tears.

One of the most serious revolts occurred in Calamba, Rizal's native *pueblo*, and here the fire of disaffection was stamped out in a bloody fashion. José, who from afar off had watched events with an agony that was only rendered the more acute by the fact that his banishment precluded him from guiding his countrymen upon wiser lines, was unable any longer to remain at a distance from the Philippines. Knowing himself for a marked man, he feared to return to the islands unless a guarantee of safety were forthcoming from the Spanish authorities, but he took up his residence in Hong-kong, and thence, on December 23, 1891, he made yet another attempt to aid the cause of his down-trodden race. On that date he addressed a letter, of which the following is a translated extract, to General Despujols, who at that time was in supreme command of the military forces in the Philippines:—

"If your Excellency believes that my feeble services might be useful to you to point out the troubles of the

country, and to assist in healing the sore left open by the recent injustices, please say so, and I, trusting in your word of honour as a gentleman, and confident that you will respect my rights as a citizen, will immediately place myself at your Excellency's orders. Your Excellency shall see and judge for yourself the loyalty of my conduct and the sincerity of my professions. If you decline my offer, your Excellency will know better than any one what it is that you are doing, but I shall have in the future the consciousness of having done all that I could to preserve my country for Spain by the bond of a solid policy based upon justice and a community of interests, without ceasing to seek her good."

The note here struck is honest and manly—it rings true; and, taken in conjunction with the spirit which animates Rizal's writings, it will go far to convince the impartial that the author of this letter was not a mere revolutionary, bent upon casting off the yoke of Spain, nor yet a selfish politician who exploited his country's sorrows to serve the end of a paltry personal ambition.

It is easily conceivable, however, that the Spanish authorities may have remained unconvinced of Rizal's *bonâ fides*, and for this an intimate knowledge of the native character supplies some excuse. Quite recently, since the occupation of the islands by the United States, the American officials discovered to their bewilderment that certain Filipinos, in whom they had reposed confidence, and whom they had appointed to various important executive posts under the new *régime*, were all the time holding similar offices under the rebel "Government," and forming a

part of its secret administrative machinery. Also it is on record that many of these gentry seemingly evinced an equal interest and zeal in the performance of their curiously incongruous sets of duties! A people, some of whose members are capable of playing a political farce of "Box and Cox" after such a fashion as this, and with a success and secretiveness that long defied detection, cannot reasonably complain if collectively they be regarded with distrust; but the Spaniards ought to have had sufficient of discrimination to perceive that Rizal was hardly an ordinary specimen of his race. The fact is that throughout, in all their dealings with him, the Spanish authorities could not divest themselves of the memory that the man was an "Indian"—a creature of a lesser breed—human, it is true, yet far nearer akin, in their estimation, to the beasts that perish than to the full-blooded white man. Viewed in this light, his offer of assistance was itself an insolence, and any treatment that might be meted out to him was good enough for such as he.

Accordingly, to the lasting disgrace of himself and of the civil and clerical authorities who countenanced his action, General Despujols deliberately set a trap for the hated *filibustero*. He accepted Rizal's offer with apparent gratitude, urged him to return to the Philippines as speedily as possible, and gave him freely all the guarantees for which he asked. Relying on these pledges, and

turning a deaf ear to the remonstrances and entreaties of his friends, Rizal set sail for Manila in July 1892, elated by the belief that a serious attempt to right the wrongs of his countrymen was at last to be made. A few days after his arrival he was arrested on the old charge of being the author of seditious literature, and was forthwith banished to the island of Mindanao, there to remain incarcerated during the pleasure of the Government. What further need have we of witnesses? No accusation against the Spaniards which is to be found in any of Rizal's books equals for atrocity the treachery and injustice of which the authorities were guilty in thus dealing with their author.

But here again the greatness of the man's character, and it may be something of the innate patience of the Oriental, came to his aid. At the age of one-and-thirty he found himself helpless in the hands of relentless enemies, a victim of their perfidy, and in a fair way to spend the remainder of his days in dreary bondage. Yet his own troubles touched him less nearly than did those of his countrymen. He did not whine or rave; he raised no passionate outcry of protest; he did not even abandon the attitude of moderation which he had consistently assumed; only he sought solace in study, and did what in him lay to better the lot of the ignorant natives around him.

Mindanao is mainly inhabited by the folk whom the Spaniards named "Moros" or Moors,—

Muhammadian Malays,—a rude and savage race who gave but a grudging allegiance to the foreign sway, and had never completely accepted the yoke of Spain. They knew nothing of Rizal, and cared not at all for the cause for which he stood; his sorrows could not move them; they were indifferent to his defeat; his victory would not have affected them in the least degree. He was to them neither more nor less than an infidel stranger whom the tide of fate had cast up upon their shores, and for such an one they had neither sympathy nor liking. Yet even here, in surroundings so unfavourable, the force of Rizal's remarkable personality, and his broad and tender love of his kind, won their full meed of recognition. After much pleading he extracted from the authorities at Manila permission to practise his profession. Soon he had become the friend and counsellor of every family in his neighbourhood; he brought comfort and relief to the suffering; he spared women in travail the needless agonies which are superimposed by ignorance; he watched beside the dying; he made the lives of those about him better, sweeter, cleaner, in that he had entered into them. Presently the infidel and the stranger had become, in all but name, the uncrowned king of the land of his banishment.

Often as he roamed those rugged shores, and passed on charitable missions from hut to hut, the narrowness of his life, the weary monotony of it

all, must have lain heavy upon his spirit, and the thought of the sufferings of his kindred, and of his own utter impotence to relieve them, must have set the vulture tearing at the great heart of this modern Prometheus. Yet, as some touching verses which he wrote at this time bear testimony, he at least for a space cheated himself into the belief that he was not altogether unhappy. Even Mindanao was a part of the Philippines, and as such it was dear to him, because it was home. Better this bondage in the islands of his ancestors than liberty in an alien land, he cries, the Malayan within him echoing, unconsciously perhaps, the proverb of his race: "Though it rain gold in a strange land, and though it rain hailstones in our own country, nevertheless is our own the better place!"

Nor was he altogether forgotten in his exile by those whom he had hoped to serve, for the island speedily became a Mecca whither, on the pretext of consulting the ablest doctor in the archipelago, many of the leaders of Filipino thought and nationality, and the foremost fighters in the army of discontent, made pious pilgrimage. What took place at all these stolen conferences no man will ever know with certainty, but the leader of a secret society, the notorious Katipunan, has left it on record that, when he visited Rizal for the purpose of enlisting his sympathies, the prisoner deprecated any resort to violent methods, and besought him to

confine his efforts to agitation on constitutional lines. The books for which José was then suffering banishment give us every reason to believe that this was throughout his invariable attitude, and no facts or documents which have yet been made public have tended to diminish the force of this probability. Nevertheless, the interest and the sympathy which, even in exile, Rizal was able to excite in the hearts of his compatriots, was viewed by the authorities with a not unnatural jealousy and suspicion.

For four long years José Rizal dwelt in banishment, doing much good, whereof the memory still lingers, and no evil that has ever been made manifest; but at last, in 1896, events occurred which seemed to afford him a chance of release. A devastating epidemic had broken out in Cuba, and the Spanish Government experienced great difficulty in enlisting sufficient medical men to deal with the emergency. The duty was at once dangerous and unpopular, and few were found willing to risk their lives in the service of a distant brown people for whom they cared nothing. José, however, at once volunteered, taking the opportunity to again reiterate the expression of his loyalty to Spain and his desire to serve her. His offer, in spite, it is said, of the angry opposition of the authorities at Manila, was accepted by the Home Government, and on September 3 Rizal embarked for Barcelona on board the *Isla de Panay*.

The clerical party watched

his departure with grave concern, for they had never ceased to attribute the disturbed state of the country to his evil influence, and to clamour for his exemplary punishment. Events which took place while he was on the high seas seemed to lend force to their contentions, for the insurrection organised by the Katipunan broke out on the island of Luzon, and assumed more threatening proportions than any of its abortive predecessors. The troops sent to compass its suppression met with scant success. The Government found itself menaced at last by what looked like a really serious popular upheaval. The fact that Rizal's release should have so nearly synchronised with the outbreak was in itself suspicious, and it was only natural that the clerical party should see in this new development the hand of their arch-enemy. That there were solid grounds for this belief appears to me to be in the last degree improbable. Apart from the fact that the measures which he had advocated had always been of a peaceful character, Rizal was not the man to seek escape from the Philippines at the very moment when an insurrection of his planning was about to be raised.

The Isla de Panay reached Barcelona on October 6, but the wires between Manila and Madrid had been busy during the three-and-thirty days which the voyage had occupied. Fate—which sometimes loves a dramatic situation—had so arranged matters that Rizal should find his old enemy, General Despu-

jols, acting as governor of Barcelona. Before this worthy the Filipino patriot was promptly haled, and, after an interview which lasted for some hours, Rizal was carried on board the s.s. Colon as a prisoner, and the return journey to Manila was begun. On November 13 the capital of the Philippines was reached, and Rizal was at once placed upon his trial on the charge of complicity in the recent rebellion.

How far a case, such as would satisfy the exacting demands of British justice, was made out for the prosecution, cannot now be definitely known. There are stories current of incriminating documents concealed in Rizal's trunks by his political enemies, and other accusations no less wild have been made against his judges. To none of these things, however, am I disposed to attach much importance. By the Spanish law the burden of proof is made to lie with the prisoner: he is held to be guilty until he has proved his innocence. Moreover, Rizal's writings were notorious; his judges were the representatives of that executive which his opinions had outraged; the clerical party sincerely believed him to be the sworn enemy of religion; and the outcry against Spanish misrule which this despised "Indian" had had the audacity to make had brought to life the bitter racial animosities which are only felt in their full intensity by white men to folk of a darker colour. In circumstances such as these what scope was there for abstract justice? When once

José Rizal, the Filipino *filibustero*, was arraigned on a capital count before a bench of Spaniards in the Philippines, it was quite plain that his days were numbered.

The Lunetta at Manila is the principal rendezvous of the fashionable world of the islands. Here, during the brief hours of coolness, all the town assembles to drive, and stroll, and loaf, and flirt, and take its pleasure in social intercourse; and here, in Spanish times, criminals were publicly executed *pour encourager les autres*. It was on the Lunetta, therefore, that, on December 30, 1896, José Rizal—patriot, statesman, and martyr, or rebel, atheist, and *filibustero* (for it was thus that the opposing parties respectively named him)—was led forth to meet his death.

It was early morning, and the bright sunshine of the tropics streamed down upon the open space, casting hard fantastic shadows, and drenching with its splendour two crowds of sightseers. The one was composed of Filipinos, cowed, melancholy, sullen, gazing through hopeless eyes at the final scene in the life of their great countryman—the man who had dared to champion their cause, and to tell the world the story of their miseries; the other was blithe of air, gay with the uniforms of officers and the bright dresses of Spanish ladies, the men jesting and laughing, the women shamelessly applauding with waving handkerchiefs and clapping palms, all alike triumphing openly in the death of the hated “Indian,” the

“brother of the water-buffalo,” whose insolence had wounded their pride.

By special instructions—which were surely a refinement of cruelty—the men of the firing-party were drawn from a Filipino corps, instead of from a Spanish regiment as was the usual custom; and thus, at the hands of his own people,—the people he had loved so well, and had so vainly tried to serve,—José Rizal met his death, and passed onward to the judgment-seat that cannot err.

Turning away, sick at heart from the contemplation of this bitter tragedy, it is with a thrill of almost vindictive satisfaction that one remembers that less than eighteen months later the Lunetta echoed once more to the sound of a mightier fusilade—the roar of the great guns with which the battle of Manila Bay was fought and won. That morning’s tumult sounded the death-knell of Spanish misrule, and caused the destinies of the Filipinos (a people who, from their very nature, be it remembered, are incapable of autonomy) to pass into the hands of men of the sturdy Anglo-Saxon stock.

What better guarantee for eventual liberty could man desire? And if in the moment of his last supreme agony the power to probe the future had been vouchsafed to José Rizal, would he not have died happy in the knowledge that the land he loved so dearly was very soon to be transferred into such safe keeping?

BORDER LIFE IN MONTENEGRO.

RUMOURS.

It is just a year ago that I last visited a certain little town named Andrijevica, and was subjected to much disappointment. The rumours which met me by the way to-day were certainly encouraging, but then things have a knack of blowing over and settling down in an amazingly short time on the Montenegrin borders.

However, I have come to stay until "something happens," a statement which calls forth great enthusiasm, for, within five minutes of my arrival, the room which has been placed at my disposal at the local baker's has filled with old acquaintances. There is Miloš, the herculean son of the Voivoda, strong as a bull, yet as ticklish as a young maiden,—a failing which it is useful to know when he gets playful and will wrestle; the veteran Corporal Slavo, who went with us last year to Velika when we were surrounded by an excited mob of Albanians on the way, and who afterwards presented me with his pistol, a family heirloom; and smart young Marko, likewise a corporal, but half his comrade's age and of a boisterous disposition. He is very quiet and sedate to-day, yet I remember the last time we met—he and I had danced together, the quaint leaping dance of the Montenegrins. How the worthy borderers had laughed and ap-

plauded, and he had to be with difficulty restrained from firing his revolver into the ceiling of the very room in which we are now formally seated in a ring, with tobacco-tins and miniature bottles of *raki* gravely circulating.

There are others, too, the young Kapetan and mayor of the town, the Voivoda's orderly, the "human telegraph," and the postmaster, of whom more anon, for I catch sight of the Voivoda himself walking down the street with his adjutant. A minute later and we are shaking each other effusively by the hand, and I am led to a *han*, for they are convivial souls in Andrijevica, and the *raki* the best in the land. At the Voivoda's right hand I am lovingly pressed into a chair, and the table before us is loaded with glasses, for the guests are many. I heave a sigh of contentment, for of all the border clans the Vassović are the most sporting, splendid men, one and all. High and difficult passes cut them off from the rest of Montenegro, and the hawk-nosed Voivoda at my side is invested with nearly autocratic powers. He wields them well and judiciously, and how often by tactful diplomacy he has averted the invasion of his country by enormous hordes of savage Albanians, he alone can tell. In a sense he holds one of

the most responsible posts in the Balkans, if not in Europe. Who can foretell the consequences should an army of Albanians overrun north-eastern Montenegro? and more than once it has been but a touch and go.

With a merry twinkle in his keen grey eyes, he lifts his glass. "Thou hast no business to be here just now," he says gravely, "but I bid thee welcome all the same."

"Then I shall see something," I begin; but he cuts me short.

"We do not speak of it," he says still more gravely, but his eyes twinkle the more. "To-morrow we confer with the Turkish governor on the frontier, and perhaps further bloodshed will be avoided."

"Thou art too official, Gospodin Voivoda," I say, and we all laugh and clink glasses. But the Kommandir and right-hand man of the Voivoda takes pity upon me. He is a soldier pure and simple, and he draws me on one side.

"Thou didst promise me last year," I say.

"I have not forgotten. Thou shalt come with my battalion, for we shall have more fighting; that I promise thee if thou hast patience and a little time."

"To-morrow, though, is a conference," I murmur.

"Mere talk," rejoins Lazo, the Kommandir (commanding officer of a battalion). "It is not against the Turks that we fight *officially*, but against the Albanians. We have grass to mow on the borders on *our* land, and this the Turks will not allow. *They* say the land

is theirs, but it is not so, and we shall mow the hay. It is ready waiting for the scythe."

He speaks this last sentence grimly, pausing suggestively before he proceeds. "For days a Commission was here striving to settle this question in peace. But thou knowest the Turk—words, nothing but words; and while even the Turkish officials were with ours, the Albanians came down and fought. Too much talk is not good, and our patience is exhausted. We, the men of Vassović, will be put off no longer from that which is ours."

"Quite right, Kommandir," I answer; "the sooner the better." And the slender, grey-haired officer—grey not from age, for he cannot be more than thirty-five, but perhaps from countless border-fights—shakes himself and laughs.

"But will the Voivoda let me go with ye?" I ask suddenly.

"Ask nothing and go; we do not speak of these things," he repeats, winking.

Evening is coming on apace, and the scene is very peaceful. Men walk up and down the only street slowly in twos and threes. At the doors of the little houses women congregate and gossip. Now a man swings along, rifle slung from shoulder, saluting smartly as he passes our table—he is from the mountains which surround the town as a wall. A horse clatters loudly up the steep path from the river, where his rider has been watering it, sitting bare-backed and riding like a cowboy. Our glasses

clink, are emptied, and refilled instantaneously by the attentive host. Jokes, laughter, and toasts follow in confused succession, but not a word of war or of fighting,—beyond a jest at my expense,—for such topics are of too little interest.

It is very pleasant, and I feel as if I were in the midst of old and dear friends. Then the moon rises slowly over the ridge before us, and still we sit on, chatting of many things. Half-a-dozen Albanians stride past, likewise with rifle, bandolier, and revolver, taking a short cut across Montenegrin territory. It is characteristic of the Montenegrin that he lets the Albanian come and go as he pleases, opens his markets to him, does not require him to yield up his arms at the border, nor refuses him permission to travel in safety, even with a border feud in certain proximity. This is all the more remarkable when the Montenegrin would be shot down within half an hour of crossing the frontier.

For fun I put the question why they allow their enemies to come thus armed into their country.

"Are we cowards?" comes the scornful answer.

"But is it politic to show perhaps thy weakness?"

"Vassović can put ten battalions in the field, and at a moment's notice," says my neighbour, "besides another twelve from the mountains round Berani. This they know; what need have we for secrecy?"

"To-morrow I leave at seven o'clock," says the Voivoda rising. The Kommandir winks at me.

"I shall be ready myself, for I contemplate riding towards the frontier," I answer.

The Voivoda smiles as he wishes me good night. "Then thou must go well armed," he says, "for our borders now are dangerous."

We part with much laughter.

"Thy supper will be spoilt," says Stefan, my servant.

"What hast thou been doing this last hour?" I ask him as we walk across the broad street. He is in an unwontedly jovial humour.

"I have cleaned and our rifles, Gospodin," answers.

CONCERNING A CONFERENCE.

The day promises to be hot. Even at this early hour the sun is making his presence felt in a decided manner. It is Sunday, and the women of Andrijevice, justly famed for their beauty, are looking prettier than ever in their best clothes.

I am just finishing my toilet, which would have been embar-

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door. The men I did not mind; but when my host fetched his pretty wife to see me manipulate my tooth-brush, I felt that modern civilisation has its advantages. I expostulated with Stefan, who looked surprised, but chased away the men and boys.

"The women do not matter," he said, and disappeared to water the horses. The adjutant, more carefully attired than usual, beckons to me as I emerge upon the street.

"All ready?" he inquires briskly. "We start in half an hour. Thy health, and may we have luck together."

A man has appeared with a tray, and the officer has helped himself to a glass of *slivovic*, tossing it off to his last remark. When the horses arrive I see the adjutant placing a formidable-looking bottle in his saddle-bag.

"Ammunition," he calls to me, patting it affectionately. Then comes the Voivoda, resplendent in his surcoat of creamy white and gold-slung sword. We mount, and a few seconds later are clattering noisily out of Andrijevice, slumbering like a good-natured war-dog in the warm sunshine, past the little church, which should see us there to-day were it not for pressing business elsewhere. The *pōp* (priest) is there, and waves us a God-speed, and a handsome bearded man hurriedly greets me, for we are old friends—the insignia on his cap proclaims that he is a *kapetan*, his beard and long hair a priest. Then down the steep bank to the river Lim, hurrying with all

speed to the mighty, far-away Danube. We splash through pools, taking short cuts across the shallow winding stream, our dismounted escort trotting nimbly ahead, and keeping there in spite of *détours*.

Thus we clatter, splash, and jostle till the path climbs again the high bank and between the lofty hills enclosing us in a deep ravine, through shady damson-orchards (*slivo*), among fields of maize and vineyards, till the ravine shows signs of opening on to a great plain.

We are already skirting the frontier. The hills across the Lim are Albania, and a lonely tower on the last spur is a blockhouse of the Turks.

"How delightfully quiet and peaceful!" I remark to the adjutant. He smiles grimly.

"Three weeks ago it looked different," he answers, waving his hand towards the opposite bank of hills. "A few hundred Arnauts were firing then into this valley. Our men were up here to the left, and soon thou wilt see what *we* did as a hint to the Turks that they should keep better order in their land."

A bugle rings out crisply and suddenly—our escort close in, adjusting belts and bandoliers. We pass the bugler a minute later, a Turkish soldier, standing stiffly at the attention by the side of the path. Round the next bend the fertile plain of Berani unfolds before us, and a few hundred yards ahead is drawn up a compact little body of Turkish infantry.

"The border," says the adjutant, indicating a rude post,

and canters up to the Voivoda. A group of Turkish officers with little white hoods on their shoulders approaches us; we dismount, and a tall, clever-looking Turk salutes the Voivoda and shakes hands. I am presented: it is the Miralaji or military governor of Berani. His staff takes up position in line on the right flank of the guard of honour, who present arms, and I, following the Voivoda's example, shake hands with each. Then they join us, and we walk together towards an arbour. A merry little fellow addresses me in French, introducing himself as the army doctor, and arrived at the arbour, the Miralaji motions us to be seated on the divan running round the three sides. An orderly brings a low table and a big bottle. Cigarettes are presented, tiny glasses are filled from the aforesaid black bottle, and we are bidden welcome in—*slivovic*, though the Turks do not drink with us.

The ragged guard of honour marches back to the cluster of tents a little distance away, their slovenly appearance still more exaggerated by the mixture of red and white fezes in the ranks, while a disreputable-looking cut-throat mounts guard solemnly before the arbour. Then it is that I catch the eye of the adjutant, and, following its glance, I notice a blackened heap of ruins. So *that* is the hint which the men of Vassovic gave to the Turks three weeks ago. It was the fortress; and a wall, still standing precariously, shows the loopholes. For an hour we sit and talk, sipping our *slivovic*,

accepting cigarettes continually from our attentive hosts. Not a word of the business on hand is spoken, and the conversation is light, uninteresting, and formal. I am beginning to wonder how the difficult affairs of the border will be settled, when the Voivoda and Miralaji rise and go alone for a stroll towards the lonely hill which stands like a sentinel upon the plain. I see it too is crowned with a blockhouse.

The conference does not last long, but I walk across to the *han*, which is filled with our escort and a crowd of Montenegrins. At least I take them to be so, for their costume is the same—even the Prince's cipher is on their caps, and they are all armed; but the adjutant tells me they live across the border and are subject to the Turks.

"In name only," he adds; "for when fighting comes, they help us. It is useful," he continues naively, "for thus are the Turks surrounded. They are all of Vassović, and can muster 9000 men. They it was who set fire to the fort."

"Are not the Turks annoyed?" I ask.

The adjutant shrugs his shoulders expressively. "What are they to do?" he queries. "They are not many, and we never commence the troubles."

The two chiefs return, calm and collected as if their talk had been about the crops,—which in a sense it has been,—and then a squad of soldiers appear with dishes. Round a table we squat, a huge platter is put before us, wooden spoons and napkins are placed in our

laps, and all fall to out of the common dish. Some help themselves with their fingers; but as we have all carefully had our hands washed, it is not so unpleasant as it would seem.

A few mouthfuls, and the platter is deftly whirled away. For the moment it annoys me, for its contents were good and I am hungry; but a second later and another dish replaces it. After ten minutes I recline indolently; the remaining procession of courses have lost their interest. Ten or a dozen courses are served up within half an hour, the majority curious mixtures which defy description; but all delicate, well-cooked, and appetising. I gaze around that barren cluster of tents, but no sign can I see of a kitchen that could produce such a meal, which, after the frugality of the Montenegrin *cuisine*, was a feast fit for Lucullus.

Coffee and cigarettes follow, and then our attentive Tommies bring water to wash our hands. I do not return to the harbour, for the Voivoda and the Turk are arguing a knotty legal point, but I seek the shade of a hut, and there lay me down to ruminate on my strange surroundings. The little doctor follows me, also three Turkish officers, and we recline on blankets speedily requisitioned from the tents.

Stefan, too, appears, and a brilliant thought strikes me.

"Go," I say, "to the Gospodin Adjutant's horse. In a saddle-bag thou wilt find——"

But Stefan has gone,—at times he is intelligent,—and reappears quickly with a bottle. The Turks shake their heads sadly, if not wistfully, for have they not watched us the whole morning tasting that seductive beverage? I fill a cup, glasses we have none, and present it to the doctor.

"The Miralaji cannot see," I say softly, "and the law does not forbid it."

The doctor looks surprised. "You have been in Turkey," he answers, and with a deprecatory gesture tosses it off.

The ice is broken, and we spend a pleasant hour, during which Stefan is busily employed. A clatter of sabres proclaims that the conference is over, and Stefan hurries off to the horses, bulging on one side.

"I thank thee for thy visit," says the Miralaji courteously. We bid an affectionate farewell, part more warmly still from my late companions, who look flushed, and then we canter past the guard of honour. A minute later and we are again on Montenegrin territory, and the adjutant is justly angered at finding thieves have been at his saddle-bags.

DEATH.

Laughing and singing we had returned to-day on our way from the feast on the frontier towards Andrijevicea. The generous sun heightened the beauty of the verdant

hills, and it was easy to forget that the grim spectre of Death was hovering hungrily over those pleasant ridges.

We had ridden for more than an hour carelessly and light-heartedly, when a group of serious men suddenly appeared before us, standing immovably across the narrow path. They were evidently awaiting us, and the expression on their bronzed features checked jest and smile alike. The Voivoda dismounted at the first word, which I, being at the rear, did not hear, and entered a hut at the side of the path. The men trooped in after him and closed the door.

Death can make his presence felt, and as I waited in silence before that door I knew that he had claimed another victim, and slowly I too dismounted. I had not long to wait: the door opened again, and the burly form of the Voivoda pushed through. Behind him I saw a figure laid out upon the earthen floor, and then the adjutant beckoned me to enter. Cap in hand I obeyed his gesture, but, prepared as I was, my heart leapt with a sudden burst of anger.

A fair-haired boy lay stiffly at my feet, and no second glance was necessary to tell how he had met his death. His young body was riddled with bullets, the white serge tight-fitting suit only showing too plainly where each wound had sapped his life-blood. A typical shepherd-boy, with that rare beauty which perfect health gives to her favourites, such as the traveller can meet

in hundreds on the rolling Montenegrin downs tending huge flocks of sheep,—hearing him sing the war-songs of his country, full of life and spirits, breaking off at intervals to whistle shrilly to his charge. And such a boy had been foully murdered,—it could be nothing else with one so young,—out off perhaps in the midst of his song.

“To-morrow I meet thee here,” I heard the Voivoda say to the peasant bearing the officer’s crossed swords upon his cap. “Have fifty men to accompany me, and send word that I would speak with the chief of the Albanians who have done this deed.”

Then were our horses brought, and slowly we rode away. Before we reached Andrijevisa I had learnt the story of the foul deed. It was, alas! only too like many similar deeds that are perpetrated yearly on the wild borders. The boy had strayed with his flocks too near the frontier, and men—Turkish soldiers they were—had hailed him roughly, telling him to go back. And the boy, with the courage of generations of heroes, had answered that so long as he was on his father’s land he would go back for no one. Then shots rang out, and the boy fell, hit in seven places by cowardly bullets; Albanians came and drove away the flocks: such was the sad story which another shepherd-boy had brought to the indignant clansmen who had fetched the poor corpse away. But Death had laid

of the youth, who has already forgotten that there is a to-morrow. I return to the main street. It is quite deserted save for the gendarme, who is patrolling thoughtfully and slowly, rifle upon his shoulder and cigarette between his lips.

"We have but a few hours' sleep," says Stefan, as he pulls off my boots. "At dawn we must creep out of the town before the Voivoda, else he

may stop us. A guide will meet us at the ford. I have filled thy bandolier."

Five minutes later and Stefan is snoring loudly. Sleep does not come so easily to me to-night, but when it does, I dream of that ghostly procession which passes noiselessly and swiftly and in silence, bearing in its midst a man with upturned face towards the gentle moon.

REVENGE.

All was still this morning at dawn when we stole out of Andrijevisa. The night gendarme was the only person we met, and he winked appreciatively as we walked our horses down the street. Now we are resting beside the noisy Lim, our horses grazing contentedly on the rich grass, and Stefan produces from his capacious breeches-pocket a bottle of fresh milk. Our *protenes* munched, —what a godsend those biscuits proved at times!—we have lit cigarettes, and Stefan is lazily throwing pebbles into the stream. A little way up the hillside is a mutilated house. Its appearance is so weird that I stroll towards it. A man is performing very perfunctory ablutions before the door, washing with a tiny ladle of water the heavy sleep from his eyes.

"God protect thee!" I call, and he, shaking the drops from his face, bids me welcome. His house is literally cut in half as with a giant knife. Seeing my inquiring gaze, his frank face clouds in anger.

"Who has done this thing?" I ask.

"My brother,—God curse him!" answers the man gruffly.

"Tell me," I continue; "and if thou hast a cup of coffee ready, I will drink it."

The surly look vanishes for one of pleasure. The true mountaineer delights in hospitality, and he leads me into the half-ruined cottage, to the common living-room, which is roughly fenced with logs at its mutilated end. A woman rises to kiss my hand, and deftly prepares my coffee, while her husband helps himself to a pinch of tobacco from my tin.

"Thou knowest the law that when a man dies his goods are equally divided between his sons?" he begins abruptly. I nod. "This was the house of my father, and when he died my brother and I were his sole inheritors. Now, my brother coveted this house for his own, but I, as the elder, have the right to live in it, and I did make him a fair offer in money and in cattle instead of the half

of the house. This he would not take, even though the *kapetan* adjudged the value of his half, and I was willing to pay. He is a wicked man, and had hated me, his own brother, for years. His half he would have and nothing else, and as I would not suffer him to live with me, he came one day when I was absent and cut the house even as thou seest it, burning in a huge fire that which was legally his."

"Hast thou no redress?" I ask.

"None," he answers gloomily. "It was his, and he took it, but some day . . ." and he pauses significantly.

I am glad when Stefan comes for me with the news that our guide has come, and that we should be moving. I bid farewell, and go forth from the outraged brother's house with feelings of relief. The company of a peasant with a grievance is in no land to be desired. The guide salutes smartly, but he is not alone. A gendarme has accompanied him. I know him—he is one of the Voivoda's most trusted men.

"Art sent to bring me back?" I ask sharply.

"Nay, Gospodin," he answers, his face wreathed in smiles; "but I am sent that thou mayest witness all in safety and from a good point of vantage. This, though, is only for *thy* ear."

I mentally thank the good-nature of the Voivoda, and we start upon our journey. We strike obliquely across the hills, and in an hour we see a small body of men marching loosely

along the valley at our feet. There are mounted men amongst them, in whom I recognise the Voivoda and his adjutant. At the neck of the valley we await them.

The Voivoda canters ahead to meet me with a cheery "Good morning." He checks my thanks, for, as he says, it may only be a talk. "We are very few," he remarks with a glance at the little body of men, who now halt around us, leaning upon their rifles, "and they will be there perhaps in thousands."

"Is it wise to face so many with so small a force?" I hazard, but the Voivoda smiles craftily.

"They are enough," he says. "I know each man from childhood; besides, a larger force would only precipitate matters." Again that smile steals over his rugged face, and I am perplexed.

"May I ride with thee?" I ask, smothering my inquisitiveness, and he nods.

"Thou art now under my command," he says laughing, and makes his old joke again of an Anglo-Montenegrin alliance.

At a curt order a score of men detach themselves, and at a long swinging double disappear up the wooded slopes. There are but thirty men left with us, and these, I notice, glance often at their loaded magazines. A subdued eagerness shows itself in every face, and I feel my heart beating faster as I unsling my carbine.

We halt at the edge of a wood, and at our feet stretches

a small plain. Under its cover we dismount, and another glance shows me that of our remaining thirty men, now but the half are there. No orders are given, each man has obviously received his instructions hours ago. Beyond the plain is a scattered forest, and with my field-glasses I fancy I can detect white-clad figures moving restlessly amongst the trees. The Voivoda moves at length from the sheltering wood, and I would follow, when the gendarme touches my arm.

"Thou art to stop with me, Gospodin," he says, and noticing my half-angered look, he adds, "Thou wilt see everything. Look! but a dozen men go with the Voivoda; the rest are here."

A stone projects from the slope, which falls away from the wood, and upon it stands the Voivoda. His orderly gives a long hail, which echoes across the valley, and then the little group waits in silence. An answer soon comes, but, unpractised in the art of long-distance talking, I can distinguish no word. It is the beginning of the conference, for, as my guide informs me, it was at this place that the shepherd-boy was murdered. He points me out the blockhouse, from which I now see soldiers emerging, and little by little hundreds of Albanians come out fearlessly into the open.

It is a wonderful sight. To the right and left almost precipitous mountains form a neck of the intervening plain, making an ideal spot to combat a treacherous flank-attack if such should be planned. The

Voivoda uses his orderly as a mouthpiece, and he is answered by a knot of men some 500 yards away. Nearer they do not come.

"What says the Voivoda?" I ask impatiently.

"He is demanding that the sheep be returned, and that the men who shot the boy should be given him. They answer that they know not who has stolen the sheep, the liars, and that the Nizams [Turkish regulars] fired, not they. It is not true, for we found three Martini bullets in the body. Listen; the Voivoda is saying so. Now they answer that one of their clan was shot three days ago, and it was the revenge for him. Ah! now they are insolent. They know but fifty men are with us, for their spies have watched us doubtless all the way."

"But what do they say?" again I demanded.

"I am listening, Gospodin; but such long talking is slow. Ah, but they shall repent these words. They answer that so will all Montenegrins be treated who graze their sheep on the border pasturages. See, the Voivoda is angry!"

"Then we will teach ye a lesson," I myself hear, and the Voivoda turns to retrace his steps.

A puff of smoke in the distance, and one of the Montenegrins near the Voivoda falls heavily to the ground. He is picked up by his comrades, and, without hurrying his step, the Voivoda raises his hand. Rifles crackle all around me, and in another second the Voivoda has

reached the wood, the bullets chipping the branches in a perfect hail around him. My gendarme pulls me down behind a rock. Our arrangements are perfect—the fifty men are spread at intervals throughout the length of the wood, and the superiority of their magazine fire over the breechloaders of the Albanians is quickly apparent.

"Watch the Nizams," shouts the gendarme. He too is firing.

They are scuttling like rabbits to their blockhouse. Three fall before they reach it, and as I hastily sweep the ground with my glasses, I see many figures, some motionless, others writhing on the grass. It is over in a few minutes, and not a soul is to be seen, though a rattle of rifle-fire comes from the opposite wood.

"It is good," says my guard, snapping the lock of his rifle, preparatory to reloading the magazine. "They have paid tenfold. Let us now go, and quickly. Yes, it is all finished. Listen, our men fire no more. Why should *we* waste good cartridges on trees? Come; it is the Voivoda's order."

And hurriedly we retrace our steps to the horses, which Stefan is holding, blind rage upon his face that he should have been debarred from the fight. We mount and ride as quickly as our guide can trot, which is a good pace. A quarter of an hour later and we charge into the arms of the adjutant, and to the right and left stand hundreds of Montenegrins. I looked surprised.

"My battalion," laughs the adjutant, "in case they follow, which they will not do if I know the cowardly rascals."

Now, an Albanian is not cowardly; but I let that pass, for I know the clan we have just fought. They are the Clementi, and once I spent a happy time in their midst—but that is another story.

Then the men of the ambuscade double in, looking extremely happy, and lastly the Voivoda. He greets me with a brisk nod, and asks me if I am satisfied.

"So I hope are the Albanians," I say, and the answer calls forth a hoarse chorus of laughter.

"Now let us get back to dinner," remarks the Voivoda. "I love not such early hours as we have kept this morning. And yesterday was a heavy day for one of my years."

The waiting battalion salutes us as we pass through their ranks, and the adjutant bids me *au revoir*.

"Thou didst know that the Albanians would only come out if thy party was so small?" I query.

"Yes," he answers; "thou seest now why we do not fear spies."

"And the battalion followed us in the rear?"

"Exactly," answers the Voivoda, lighting a cigarette.

I ponder much on the wiles of the guileless Montenegrin as I somewhat thoughtfully ride by his side.

REGINALD WYON.

THE BORDER MINSTRELSY.

THE influence of ballads, both English and Scottish, upon our literature is clear enough to need no demonstration. Percy's 'Reliques' did as much as the poetry of Gray to herald the triumph of romance, which cast a glamour over the last years of the eighteenth century. After these examples of a bolder style, the couplet of Pope began to lose its supremacy, and not even the stout Toryism of Dr Johnson could make good its claim to be the only poetry worth making. But the Romanticism of Bishop Percy and Thomas Gray was the mere beginning of a movement. It did no more than foretell what it could not achieve. It killed the old convention without putting another in its place. It aspired to drive poetry from the study into the open air; it aimed to replace the imitation of Ovid by a study of nature; but the old prison walls were high, the old prison doors were stout, and the way of escape, though indicated, was not always easy. The achievement of Scott, on the other hand, was not tentative. He resumed in himself the Romantic Movement. His work, which gave the world a new literature, was uniform and consistent. Both by precept and example he went back to the age of courage and adventure, which flourished before the eighteenth century, and he showed himself in his earliest work as in his last the prophet of romance. 'The Min-

strelsy of the Scottish Border,' in truth, the first great work to bear upon its title-page the name of Walter Scott, might be taken as a handbook of the new gospel, the new style. In other words, it was the first wave of that Romantic Movement which presently overwhelmed Europe, and whose echo was heard not only upon the shores of Britain, but from end to end of cultured France and sentimental Germany.

The ballad, however, had known centuries of popularity before the revival of Romance. It had already appealed both to the highest and the lowest in the court of taste. The poets had joined with the people in acclaiming the large style and the direct simplicity of our popular poetry. If it had not gained the formal recognition of scholars and critics, that is because the taste of scholars and critics is not always equal to their knowledge. But while the poet detected the essence of his art in the best of the ballads, the rough broadsheet satisfied those untutored readers who sought their literature at the street-corner. The song of "Chevy Chase," for instance, was in the brave old days "the favourite Ballad of the common People of England," yet Ben Jonson declared that he would rather have written it than all his works. Nor does Sir Philip Sidney temper his enthusiasm in his 'Defence of Poesy.' "Certainly," says he, "I must con-

fess my own barbarousness. I never heard the old song of 'Piercy and Douglas,' that I found not my heart more moved than with a Trumpet; and yet it is sung by some blind Crowder with no rougher voice than rude Stile; which being so evil apparelled in the Dust and Cobweb of that uncivil Age, what would it work trimmed with the gorgeous Eloquence of Pindar?" In yet more evil apparel did Addison encounter it, for he knew but a poor modern version of the poem which moved Sidney's heart more than with a trumpet. Nevertheless he found in this poor modern version "the majestic simplicity" of the ancient poets, and to prove his wise appreciation he compared it passage by passage with the golden lines of the 'Æneid.' In other words, he recognised that the ballad was a reasoned work of art, not the accidental outpouring of the natural man. Meanwhile, Samuel Pepys, to whom nothing human came amiss, had made that priceless collection of ballads which is still the glory of Magdalene College. Thus through the eighteenth century the popular interest in popular poetry grew until Percy published his 'Reliques,' and Ritson with more justice than good manners exposed the Bishop's literary method. So that Scott's 'Minstrelsy' did not create, it rather revived, an enthusiasm for the ancient ballads. But he gave them so bright a setting of romance, he enlivened them with a learning so sympathetic, that he created for the world of letters,

and for himself especially, a new impulse, a new influence.

It was Percy's 'Reliques' which first satisfied his curiosity. From his early childhood he had been an adept in legendary lore, and such rough rhymes as he could collect were still in secret "the Delilahs of his imagination," when suddenly he came upon the Bishop of Dromore's collection of ancient poetry, printed and annotated with all the solemnity of scholarship. But the story must be told in his own words. "I remember well the spot where I read these volumes for the first time," so he writes in his 'Autobiography.' "It was beneath a huge platanus-tree, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbour. . . . The summer day sped onward so fast, that, notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was still found entranced in my intellectual banquet." The spell thus cast upon him endured until the end of his life. Henceforth the meanest fragment of popular poetry enchanted him. He began to collect whatever legends and verses came to his ears; he wandered far afield to find such peasants as kept green the memories of their youth; and when he undertook to edit the 'Minstrelsy of the Border,' he had not a little material ready to his hand. Moreover, he had stimulated his love of romance by translating Bürger's "Lenore," and when he promised to find work for Ballantyne's newly established

press, it was not strange that he should suggest an edition of ancient ballads. The work, which received much aid from Richard Heber, John Leyden, and others, was published in 1802-3, and contained, as a by no means extravagant critic declared, "the elements of a hundred historical romances."

For many years this admirable collection—Scott's first essay in literature—has not been reprinted. And it is a pleasure to welcome Mr Henderson's complete and scholarly edition.¹ While he has preserved intact Scott's eloquent introductions and wise commentaries, the new editor has not scrupled to illustrate both text and commentary from the stores of his own erudition; and such illustration is the more valuable, not only because recent research has increased our knowledge of ancient poetry, but because Scott's ingenuous enthusiasm sometimes persuaded him to accept modern imitations as old ballads. Moreover, Scott could not refrain his hand from the ancient text, and he treated his material with no more respect, if with far happier results, than Percy himself. His aim was to combine in his text the best of all the versions known to him. But this aim could not be achieved without new words, phrases, lines, and even stanzas. In Mr Henderson's words, Scott "often found it impossible to resist the impulse to improve the phrase-

ology, and he hardly ever resisted the impulse to improve the rhythm or the rhyme. He rarely scrupled to substitute an archaic word or phrase—if one was to be had inside or outside ballad literature—for one merely modern, especially if the modern one was jejune, or commonplace, or vulgar." Thus Mr Henderson, and the practice of Scott, which was also the practice of Burns, needs no extenuation. A ballad is not sacred. By the very method of its transmission it is exposed to the chances of time and ignorance. No doubt it came from its maker as well finished as a bard's skill could make it. Then by a process of attrition it became commonplace, or even trivial. The difficult or rare words, which gave a colour to its diction, were rejected by an ill-educated ear, and the editor in restoring archaic words or phrases was merely attempting to give the ballad the style and shape which it had lost. But Scott's ingenuity makes the work of textual criticism puzzling and intricate, and it is no small praise to say that Mr Henderson has performed this portion of his task with consummate skill. Indeed, he is no novice in tracking changes and interpolations; he has already shown his ingenuity in the Centenary Edition of Burns; and he collects and compares *varias lectiones* with a care in all respects worthy of an editor of the classics. Scott, as Mr

¹ Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Edited by T. F. Henderson. 4 vols. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Henderson tells us, was not so fine a restorer as Burns; he lacked his countryman's "rare intuition and genius for style"; but he yielded neither to Burns nor to any man in intrepidity; and much that is excellent in his 'Minstrelsy' is due to the taste and learning of its editor. To consult Mr Henderson's footnotes is to discover with how bold a hand Walter Scott managed his text. Look at "Sir Patrick Spens," for instance, and you will note that the fourth stanza is all Scott's own, written "to complete the story." In the fourteenth stanza, again, is a couplet which shines out among its fellows,—

"When the lift grew dark, and the
wind blew loud,
And gurlie grew the sea ;"—

and you are not surprised that Scott has been at work again. But while there are few ballads which do not reveal in a word or a line the touch of the master, Scott, as Mr Henderson points out, could not refrain his hand from a ballad which aroused his enthusiasm for clan or country. If ever a Scott were engaged, if ever a Buccleuch drew sword from scabbard, then their loyal kinsman did his best to embellish the ballad which sang their praise. So it is that Scott, as he himself admitted, rewrote that masterpiece "Kinmont Willie"; so it is that he did his utmost to improve "Otterbourne," and added more than one characteristic stanza to "Jamie Telfer." And though this practice of restoration not only obscures the truth, but immeasurably increases the toil

of subsequent editors, it justifies itself by excellence, and oftentimes converts a rough jingle into a work of art.

The ballads, then, have come down to us without the pride of an author's name, and without the sanctity of a received text. Their themes, for the most part, are so simple as to find parallels not only in civilised but in savage communities. And these parallels, it need hardly be said, have deeply puzzled the ingenuity of scholars. There are those, in truth, who believe that ballads were a natural growth, a spontaneous emanation of folk-fancy, an echo of "the heart of a people." To this extraordinary opinion they have been brought by a similarity of plot and story, which they cannot otherwise explain. If more than one race delights in the same ballad, they argue that the ballad must be produced not by a single poet but by the spirit of the race. To us the theory seems fantastically absurd. It is true that a ballad is chopped and changed by popular taste, so long as it exists merely in the mouths of men. One reciter, ignorant of strange words, may clip it into commonplace; another, moved by a love of affectation, may illumine its stanzas with jewels of rare colour. But every ballad, as every fairy story, was in its inception the work of a single brain. That which is transmitted by many is made by one, and though a whole tribe may act in common, a whole tribe cannot think or compose in common. Nor is it a mere process of collaboration,

to which the folk-lorists would ask us to pin our faith. They declare that ballads are the product of a "folk-fancy," which seems to be a vague spirit—of the tribe, yet not the tribe. Wherefore, to enforce their argument, they detect in all ballads what they call a "popular style," which belongs in their view not to a man but to an emanation. The fallacy of this view is easily demonstrable. The ballads are marked by certain characteristics of style and diction—that is true; but they are thus marked because the makers of ballads were bound in the chains of a strict tradition. He who sat him down to make a ballad naturally obeyed the rules of his craft, and not being an inventor in style was content to follow a renowned example. If a popular style be the proof of a collective (or spiritual) authorship, we might easily argue that Pope, Dryden, and the rest had no separate existence, and that the couplet, practised with so general a success in the eighteenth century, really expressed "the heart of the people." Indeed, the poets of each age commonly find one convention best fitted to their thought and purpose, but Pope's achievement is not less his own because Addison, Tickell, and the rest also fashioned the couplet. Or, to take an example from a kind of literature which most nearly resembles the ballad. Time was when the hanging of a notorious malefactor was celebrated in a set of scurvy couplets surmounted by a rude woodcut. Yet no one supposes that the produc-

tions of Jemmy Catnach's press were the vague efflorescence of Newgate. Even the Flying Stationer was a man.

However, our scholars have been so bewildered by the absence of names and by the similarity of plots that they have invented a process of the human mind (or minds) hitherto unknown, and to us at least incredible. And how small is the difficulty which they would remove by the gigantic fancy of composite authorship! It need scarcely be said that Sir Walter Scott and Mr Henderson both hold sound views concerning the origin of ballads. The similarity of plot is no stumbling-block. "An exhaustive list of the plots of the novelists of all nations," says Mr Henderson, "would be certain to reveal many strange coincidences; but a very large number of them could not be other than merely accidental." And he further points out that the range of the ballad is far more limited than the range of the novel, both in length and subject. He also quotes in defence of his own opinion the opinion of Professor Child, than whose no authority is greater. "The incidents of many ballads are such as might occur anywhere and at any time," says the professor; "and with regard to agreements that cannot be explained in this way, we have only to remember that tales and songs were the chief social amusements of all classes of people in all the nations of Europe during the Middle Ages, and that new stories would be eagerly sought for

by those whose business it was to furnish this amusement, and be rapidly spread among the fraternity." That is quite true; and when we remember how easy an opportunity of exchange was created by the Crusades, the similarity of plot need not surprise us.

A reasonable exchange, then, will explain much. That which remains needs no explanation. The human mind moves naturally along similar lines, and charges of plagiarism brought against novelist or playwright are more often ill-founded than not. Not long since two dramatists built their plays round tea-cups and S-shaped sofas, and the independence of both could not be questioned. And the similarities which we note at home are yet more striking abroad. The students of folk-lore have collected parallels until we can no longer doubt the uniformity of the human brain. When first the world found the legends of Greece reproduced in Mexico or the Solomon Islands it was justly puzzled. Yet a little thought will simplify this most intricate puzzle. The Mexican and the Solomon Islander are men as the ancient Greeks were men, and they solved their doubts or arrayed their fancy in terms which were essentially human. What wonder, then, that Greek and Mexican meet on this common ground of humanity? The Mexican, like the Greek, sleeps when he is tired, eats when he is hungry, covers him when he is cold, or keeps the sun from his head if it be hot. Why, then, should he not, if

he be a poet, sing the song of Orpheus and Eurydice? Why, if he be a potter, should he not ornament his clay with the same pattern which an Athenian might have used? Plot and pattern belong alike to the human race, and perhaps divergence would be more wonderful than the similarity which has so deeply troubled the scholars.

We are convinced, in fact, that the ballad-maker was a man, not a "fancy," even though his name be lost in the mist of oral transmission, or be absent, according to custom, from the popular broadsheet. And there are no more ingenious pages in Scott's *Remarks on Popular Poetry* than those in which he sketches the early poets. They uniformly display, says he, "a bold, rude, original cast of poetry and expression. They have walked at free will, and with unconstrained steps, along the wilds of Parnassus." But the bard must possess qualities which mark him out from the rest of his tribe. While his fellows follow the hunt, or engage in warfare, he sits at home to chronicle the deeds in which he takes no part. Often, maybe, he is a Tyrtæus, lame, and blind of an eye; always he is one whose mind dominates his body, and whose gifts of observation and expression are a wonder to the tribe. But, as Scott says, "to attain the highest point of his profession the poet must have that original power of embodying and detailing circumstances which can place before the

eyes of others a scene which only exists in his own imagination." This quality, of course, is at once the rarest and most beautiful. Yet none can doubt that it is possessed by the best of the ballad-makers. Nor does Scott stay his hand at this sketch of the poet. He is bold enough to give the full credit of the ballads not to the tribe which listens to them but to the great man who composes them. The excellence of popular poetry, he says, "must depend in some measure, no doubt, on the temper and manners of the people, or on their proximity to those spirit-stirring events which are naturally selected as the subject of poetry, and on the more comprehensive or energetic character of the language spoken by the tribe. But the progress of the art is far more dependent upon the rise of some highly gifted individual, possessing in a pre-eminent and uncommon degree the powers demanded, whose talents influence the taste of a whole nation, and entail on their posterity and language a character almost indelibly sacred." Here, indeed, is the essence of the argument. In Scott's eyes the ballad-maker preceded the ballad, and was of greater importance than the tribe to which he belonged, or than the "fancy" which inspired his folk. Nor could it well be otherwise. Not even the champions of folk-lore could attribute such ballads as describe definite historical events to the throbbing heart of the people, and the ballad-maker

was for so much in the making of ballads, that his art, like the art of dramatic or lyrical poetry, varied with the artist's talent. He was no common poet who wrote the "Twa Corbies," or "Tamlane," or "Chevy Chase," or even the first draft of "Kinmont Willie." In such works as these we find not the experiment of a bungling hand, but the cultivation of an art, which is no more barbarous than the art of Homer is barbarous. True it is that the ancient is not necessarily barbarous. For us Homer is the father of poetry, but only because we know not the many poets who preceded him. Were our knowledge deeper, then we should understand that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were the end, not the beginning, of an art—and this distinction they share with the best of the ballads.

Unhappily, as we have said, very few ballads have come down to us in the shape given them by their makers. As we know them, they are attenuated by use and marred by custom. The reciters, at a loss for a line, never scrupled to insert a commonplace, and that is why certain phrases recur unnumbered times in ballad literature without propriety or effect. Moreover, the more finely poetical the style, the greater chance there was of attrition, since the minstrels, misunderstanding ornate language and difficult versification, omitted enough to obscure both sense and rhythm, or substituted corruptions for unfamiliar words. In the same manner were the texts of the

ancient classics deformed, for the slaves who wrote them received their impression not through the eye but through the ear, and blundered accordingly. Then followed the scholar, who, knowing the cause of error, grew skilled in restoring the old text, and, influenced not only by respect for his author but by the wholesome fear of other scholars, controlled his fancy within proper limits. The editors of ballads were not so easily restrained: except Ritson, not one of them seems to have had a conscience. They forged, they vamped, they interpolated, until the modern editor has the greatest difficulty to distinguish new and old. Pinkerton, for instance, was intrepid as Macpherson, and confessed that of his 'Select Ballads' five at least were his own. Scott blamed Pinkerton, and was not himself above reproach. Not only did he retouch many a popular poem, as we have seen; he was not always careful to examine the source of his ballads. In other words, a sincere enthusiasm for his subject bred a sort of credulity. He believed what he wished to be true, and reposed a too easy confidence in Surtees and James Hogg. It is now generally believed that "Auld Maitland" is not authentic, and that Hogg planted it upon Scott with the help of his mother, who "learned it an' mony mae frae auld Baby Mettlin, who was housekeeper to the first laird of Tushielaw." Yet we can feel nothing

else than gratitude for the imposition, since "Auld Maitland," authentic or not, gave Scott an opportunity of writing an admirable note on some customs of chivalry.

As to the status of the minstrels who chanted their own or others' ballads up and down the country there is a divergence of opinion. Scott thinks that they were no better than the feigned fools and sturdy beggars with whom they were ranked in a well-known statute. But another statute absolves them from the punishment to which only fools, "who are not bards," are amenable. And not only were they absolved from punishment; they were held in some sort of esteem, and, like knights and heralds, were allowed to be habited in silk.¹ However, vagabond or not, the ancient minstrels have long since been dead,—killed, no doubt, by education and the printing-press, though, in truth, they made a brave fight against those damaging institutions. The last of them, according to Scott, died in October 1792 at Old Rain in Aberdeenshire. Charles Leslie was his name, and to his trade he was "a hawker, or ballad-singer, well known in that country by the name of Mussel-mou'd Charlie!" But, though the minstrels no longer pad up and down the country paying their lodging with music and tale, their ballads live on, exchanging the popularity of village and hedgerow for the more serious, if less enthusiastic, appreciation of the study.

¹ See Mr T. F. Henderson's 'Old-World Scotland.'

The virtue of the ballads is not far to seek. In the first place, their theme is the simple drama of active life. They neither discriminate the subtle shades nor make vain researches into human character. But a riever is in prison, and his comrades must needs rescue him from the hands of Scrope. Or the sea grows gurlly, and

"O forty miles off Aberdeen,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet."

Or again, Douglas and Percy meet at Otterbourne, and while Douglas bites the dust, Percy yields to Sir Hugh the Montgomery. Indeed, whatever the adventure is, it is simple as humanity, and if, as in most cases, it be turned to tragedy, a sense of courage and enterprise dries up our tears. Surely the most callous reader may say with Sir Philip Sidney that his heart is more moved than with a trumpet. Another shining merit of the ballads is that they plunge straight into the midst of things. They do not worry the reader with useless prologues. Here, for instance, is the opening stanza of "Otterbourne," an opening, by the way, which did good service to many a bard:—

"It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey."

The style is as simple as the spirit, and though strange words appear now and again, a "literary" touch is generally a clear proof of forgery or emendation. Not that the ballad has not a "literary" touch of its own. But its

aim is not precisely the aim of cultured poetry, and the interference of the one with the other, if it be not made by a master's hand, can generally be detected. However, turn these volumes where you will, and you will find true drama, expressed in the simplest terms. Take this passage from "Jamie Telfer," for instance, and notice with what speed the action moves:—

"Then till't they gaed, wi' heart and hand;
The blows fell thick as bickering hail;
And mony a horse ran masterless,
And mony a comely cheek was pale!
But Willie was stricken ower the head,
And thro' the knapsap the sword
has gane;
And Harden grat for very rage,
When Willie on the grund lay slane.
'Revenge! revenge!' auld Wat can cry;
'Fye, lads, lay on them cruellie!
We'll ne'er see Tiviot-side again,
Or Willie's death revenged sall be."

Nor are the sentimental and fantastic ballads one whit inferior to the ballads which echo to the cries of war. "Lord Randal," "Clerk Saunders," "Tamlane," "The Lament of the Border Widow," may all have their parallels in the legends of other countries, but, as told by the ballad-makers, their tales are ever sad and ever fresh. And how solemn is the "Lyke-Wake Dirge," with its haunting refrain:—

"This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every night and alle;
Fire and sleete, and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thye saule.
When thou from hence away are paste,
Every nighte and alle;
To Whinny-muir thou comest at laste,
And Christe receive thye saule!"

And so at last we arrive at the "Twa Corbies," that master-

piece of lyric tragedy, which, for all its English parallel, was the work, not of a folk-fancy, but of a great artist, the culmination, not of a tribal tendency, but of an art. A minstrelsy which reveals so fine a gem as this may well inspire a national pride.

It was fortunate for Scotland that its popular poetry was written in the popular tongue. Thus it set up a standard for itself, and was not asked to rival the poetry of the learned. Now the ballads of England, being written in the tongue which Shakespeare wrote, suggest a meanness of diction which we do not detect in the 'Border Minstrelsy.' Admirable as is "Chevy Chase," we cannot but apply a false test to its verses, and deprive it of a distinction which none will deny to "Otterbourne." And the Border minstrels were not only fortunate in their language—they were fortunate in their theme. They sang the gallant feats of arms performed by the gallant rieviers. Through the ballads, which are all of the open sky and rolling down, blows the keen air of the Borders, "upon which were presented the most memorable conflicts of two gallant nations." It may be that patriotism did not stir the hearts of the valiant Scotts and Armstrongs who rode south upon a foray. But they were soldiers although they fought for their own hand, and they were only thieves

because cattle were the proper booty of soldiers. However, such as they were, they inspired the best ballads that ever were written, and of these ballads no more scholarly edition exists than this, in which Mr Henderson has checked the marvellous erudition of Walter Scott by the results of modern research. We have said that the influence of the 'Border Minstrelsy' was profound. On no one was it so profound as upon Scott himself. He came out of the task of editing a finished antiquary, ready for the composition of the *Waverley Novels*. The author of the common romance adopts a period, and crams to make his own book respectably accurate. The introductions to the ballads prove how deeply Scott was versed in the history of his country, how easily he could take up this period or that without cramming. "I well remember," writes Lockhart, "when '*Waverley*' was a new book, and all the world were puzzling themselves about the authorship, to have heard the poet of '*The Isle of Palms*' exclaim impatiently, 'I wonder what all the people are perplexing themselves with: have they forgotten the prose of the '*Minstrelsy*'?" And excellent as the '*Minstrelsy*' is in itself, we cannot but pay it another and a greater debt of gratitude, for that it is (so to say) the raw material of the *Waverley Novels*.¹

¹ By way of frontispiece to volume i. an interesting and hitherto unpublished portrait of Sir Walter Scott is reproduced. It was painted by Sir William Allan, and has by some been called "The Minstrel Portrait," so that there can be no question of its appropriateness to the present edition. Once the property of Mr John Blackwood, it now belongs to his daughter, Mrs Blackwood Porter, who has kindly allowed its reproduction.

ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.

XI. FULL CRY.

LUCKHOFF, in normal circumstances, has little to distinguish it from the hundred and one rural villages scattered over the South African veldt. If anything, it is more squalid than the general run of fourth-rate hamlets. But when the New Cavalry Brigade went into billet there, it was more or less a deserted and plundered village. The inhabitants may have totalled a hundred souls, with the exception of one man, all women and children; and we should not have found these in possession if our Intelligence guide had been able to give earlier notice of our coming. As was the case with all these hamlets, the inhabitants who had escaped the clutches of the "clearing-up" columns were in the possession of *caches* in the neighbourhood, where they hid away as soon as the dust-clouds on the horizon forewarned them of the near approach of a British column. Many columns had already "been through" Luckhoff, from Clements in the early days to Settle moving in stately magnificence with thousands of cattle and hundreds of women in the preceding spring. Each marauder in turn had left something of a mark, but none had left so bare a skeleton or had stamped so plainly the impress of war as a column of somebody's bushmen. The brigadier had planted his little red pennant in front of the villa of the

absconded Predikant. It was the only house in the place which had any pretension to decorative finish. But when the staff took possession it was a sorry pigsty. In its halcyon days a part of the house had evidently been in the possession of a young mother, for two of the apartments were knee-deep in a disordered heap of female apparel, intermingled with the tiny garments which mothers store away—small socks and bonnets tied with pink and blue. The ruthless hand of man had ransacked each drawer and crevice, and all that calls forth the sacred care of women lay tossed and tumbled in the dirt of floor and passage. To those who had time to think, a sad, heart-rending sight, pitiful evidence of the degrading influence of war. During the first year of the struggle there would not have been a man in the British army who would have pushed a woman aside to ransack the sacred corners of her chamber. But war's brutal influence in time blunted the finer instincts. How could it be otherwise? The longer a struggle is protracted the fiercer and more bestial it will become, until at last familiarity with the final arbitration of the beast deadens the better influences of human reasoning. As one saw upon every hand the ruin of these homes—many of which showed

evidence of refinement bred of wealth and education—one felt the pity of it all, and cursed the leaders who in their spirit of tin-pot patriotism had pushed a struggle, already hopeless, to its most barbarous issue.

Looting was not allowed. That is true, but how was it to be prevented?—where can you draw the line between legitimate requisition in war and brutal plunder? Can you punish the men who in the morning followed you without flinching in the face of death, because in the evening you find them searching in a deserted house for a kerchief, waistband, or baby's sock to send as a memento to the mother or sweetheart waiting patiently at home? Is there not some extenuation for the man whose "pal" has been ambushed and butchered, when he gleefully places a match to the murderer's byre or dwelling? Place yourselves in the position of the fighting man before you consider actions which are inseparable from partisan warfare, and bear in mind that if the leaders of the enemy had capitulated when it was first evident that they were a beaten people, there would not have been a tithe of the brutality and suffering which marked the final phases of the struggle. The story of the Predikant was strange. Himself a firebrand of the most dangerous nature, he had preached an anti-British *jihad* with all the force of his ecclesiastical rhetoric. Yet his three sons were of other clay. One, a staunch trooper of Thorney-

croft's, had died a soldier's death on Spion Kop's death-swept summit; another, an athlete of no mean order, had served in Lord Roberts' body-guard; while the third was still fighting against the people of his kind as an officer in some other British corps. The two daughters, both married to *veldt kornets*, were already widows, it may be, for the irony of fate is infinite, by their brothers' rifles.

We found only one man in Luckhoff, and he was a Scotsman. His story was plausible; but though it had satisfied other column commanders, it did not find the same credence with our brigadier. According to the man's statement he was neutral. Had been neutral since the outbreak of war. He was an engineer in the Koffyfontein mines, and since these had closed down he had come to Luckhoff and made a living by market-gardening. Two circumstances conspired against the continued freedom of this so-called Scotsman. The first was the fact that he quoted our Intelligence guide as a reference for his good conduct; the second, that we had found a steam flour-mill at work in the vicinity, and circumstantial evidence pointed to our market-gardener as the *mechanicien* in charge. This being given as the real reason for his presence in the hamlet, there was no need for his sojourn to be continued, as we had closed down the safety-valve until the boiler burst, and wrecked the mechanism of the engine. Flour-mills, even when worked by market-

gardeners of doubtful neutrality, can be of service to a starving enemy.

The brigadier determined to halt a little in Luckhoff to procure if possible more definite information. About midday this information came, from both ordinary and extraordinary channels. As the headquarters sat at lunch a mounted messenger arrived from Orange River,—a small spare Hottentot or Griqua, who weighed about five stone, and who had been put upon a horse and told to cover fifteen miles an hour until he found us. The message he brought was in point of fact a confirmation of the information which we had gleaned already from our prisoner of the preceding evening. “De Wet, and with him the President,” ran the message, “crossed the Orange River at Botha’s Drift at three o’clock to-day (yesterday). By mistake gap in circle let him through. Crossed without transport and with smallest following. Presumably will go north. Plumer cannot leave Springfontein until early day after to-morrow (to-morrow). Must leave you to act exactly as you think right. Co-operate if possible with Plumer!”

Brigadier. “Presumably will go north! Well, that is the most infantile expression of opinion that I have ever heard. A man crosses from the south bank of a river to the north, and by an extreme effort our friends of the Intelligence are able to conjecture that he will go north. He certainly has the northern field open to him. It

is worthy of the information slips issued by our friend the D.A.A.G. for Intelligence at Bloemfontein for the guidance of the columns in his districts: ‘Everything in this shop window sixpence halfpenny; take your choice every time.’ As usual, we shall have to work out our own salvation. Mr Intelligence, the map!”

The map was duly spread upon the Reverend Predikant’s mahogany board, and with the aid of a slip of paper the distances measured off. The brigadier sat back in his chair, drawing meditatively at the bent stem of his Boer pipe. When the measuring was over he remained silent a moment and then gave his opinion of the situation.

Brigadier. “They evidently have no one operating down from Bloemfontein, otherwise they would not quote Plumer. It is just as evident that De Wet slipped across the river at some spot where it is not precisely convenient for any of our Colony brigands to pursue him. That is, we are their only hope and the only mobile people within reach. De Wet crossed the Orange River yesterday afternoon, therefore, according to our information, he should have slept at Philippolis last night. As a rule De Wet never sleeps in the same place on two consecutive nights. But his arrival at Philippolis was in rather peculiar circumstances. He didn’t arrive as a successful swashbuckler cocking his hat with all his plans made, but a washed-out fugitive with all his plans to

make. Therefore the chances are that he won't have got very far on his way from Philippolis to-night. Probably he won't make a start until to-morrow morning. He knows that his right is clear. He knew last night or early this morning that we had arrived at Luckhoff. He knows by this that we have halted this morning, and he knows that the Riet River is in flood. Therefore it is plain that he, taking us as an average British commando, can leave Philippolis at daybreak to-morrow, cross the Riet, and destroy the Kalabas bridge behind him without inconvenience from us. At least that is the map reading of this picnic. It is a short fifty miles from Philippolis to Fauresmith; we are thirty miles from Fauresmith. A British commando halted to-day would not reach Fauresmith until evening to-morrow; a Boer *paarde kommando* will have done its fifty miles by the time one of our 'crawlers' outspan for breakfast. Now, old man Baker, get out orders. For public guidance, we march at four o'clock for Koffyfontein and Kimberley, going d—d slow; for private information, as soon as it is dark we will change direction and be in possession of Fauresmith as soon after daybreak as possible. Whoever is in possession of Fauresmith will be in possession of the bridge over Riet River. Mr Intelligence, it will be your business to make it sufficiently well known in this metropolis that our destination is Koffyfontein for Kimberley. Don't

make them suspicious by being too emphatic about it."

Brigade-Major. "Very good, sir, but we shall have to cover at least forty miles!"

B. "True for you; what's the odds?"

B.-M. "Only the ox-transport. It can't reach Fauresmith by daybreak, night-marching. There ain't anything of a moon—in fact it's going to be devilish dark with all these clouds about."

B. "True again: but we will dodge all that. As soon as we have changed direction to our true line, we will leave the transport to come along the best it may: it can follow us to Fauresmith."

B.-M. "What escort shall I give it?"

B. "How many dismounted men are there? It can have just as many cripples as we possess. I am not going to worry about transport. If I am wrong in my calculations and De Wet attempts to cross behind me, I want that transport to deceive him. He would never dream of it being unprotected. He cannot be in any strength; besides, I shall want every mounted man I have got for my scheme. The transport, ox and mule, must take its chance. But see that it doesn't straggle. The mule can keep up with us as long as it can, but it must keep together. Likewise the ox-transport, taking its own time, must keep closed up. I assure you the only object of these people on this journey will be to get away. Two blocks of moving waggons will mystify them, not attract them.

Right away,—not a word about the change of direction until after dark—not even to C.O.'s. Tell 'em any story you like."

The Intelligence officer had barely got outside when a tall and even good-looking native attracted his attention by raising his battered hat and murmuring "kos." The man, a magnificent specimen of the Basuto savage, was quivering with emotion, and he pointed to a great grey-white weal which showed across his neck and open breast.

Intelligence Officer. "Sjambok?"

Basuto. "Yah, Bos!"

I.O. "How did you come by this?"

The native, who was a Basuto of more than average intelligence, then told the following astounding story. He was one of the five native scouts employed by the new Intelligence guide. The morning that the New Cavalry Brigade had left Orange River Station, he had been sent forward by our friend with a letter to Commandant Botmann, and, finding that he was not at Luckhoff, the Basuto had warned the acting landrost¹ there of the approach of the British, and had then ridden on to Philippolis, and was there when De Wet and Steyn arrived; and in the

truly expressive language of the native he told of their dejection and the dispiriting nature of the speech which the ex-President had made to the assembled Burghers. He also furnished the valuable information that De Wet had issued instructions that all stray burghers and Brand's, Wessel's, Akermann's, and Kolbe's commandos should concentrate with him at Petrusberg, whither he was proceeding on the following day with his personal body-guard under Theron. As the brigadier had anticipated, De Wet was halting a day to allow his stragglers to concentrate. In all he would have about 300 men and forty Cape carts. But at Petrusberg they would concentrate to about 1200 or 1500. The Basuto had ridden through from Philippolis that night, and had arrived back at Luckhoff only half an hour ago. The blow which was responsible for this disclosure of his master's perfidy and the Boer plans was by reason of a favourite horse. In order to ensure the safe delivery of his message, and not dreaming that it would go all the way to Philippolis, the Intelligence guide had mounted the Basuto on his best horse. This best horse

¹ Another curious episode in this strange campaign can be observed here. We had been in nominal possession of the Southern Free State for many months, during a considerable period of which the local administration had been administered by British agents. Yet throughout this period Boer landrosts were also appointed, and whenever a commando strong enough to assert the Orange Free State authority was in the vicinity, immediately took over their duties. Often, it is believed, the same men acted for both belligerents. When Judge Hertzog made his tour of the South-Western Free State immediately before entering upon his invasion of the Colony, he reinstated the Boer administration in all the southern townships.

had caught the eye of a Winburg burgher in Philippolis, and he had relieved the Basuto of it, leaving him to make his way back upon some scarecrow. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.*

The Intelligence officer smoothed over the Basuto's ill-will with fair-mouthed promises, and led him to understand that if he went back to his master and suffered in silence for a short period longer he would be handsomely rewarded. But, said the dignified savage, "he bad man—always bad man, telling d—d Dutchmens always. Boss give me gun, no more telling Dutchmens!" The Intelligence officer pacified the man by promises of an executive in the near future, and then went to the brigadier with the information and an earnest conspiracy against the guide's life. However, the evidence was not conclusive enough for the brigadier. "What proof have you that it is not all a plant on the part of your friend, Mr Intelligence? Besides, I would never hang a white man on the evidence of a black. I am bad at the 'black-cap' game, but I'll tell you what I will do. I don't want any more of this guide; tell him that we are going to Kimberley, and that he can go back to Orange River at once; write a letter to the De Aar Intelligence coves, and tell them we are bound for Kimberley, seal it heavily with sealing-wax, and then, if your 'pal' is the bandit you represent him to be, he will read it and send it to De Wet to-night. If he is not a knave he will deliver it some time to-morrow

night, when we shall be out of the ken of the De Aar folk, and the lie won't matter." And so it was arranged. . . .

It has been pointed out earlier in these papers how often De Wet has owed his freedom, and incidentally his life, to the leaning of the law of chances in his favour. Times without number a sequence of extraordinary circumstances has conspired to defeat the best-laid plans which have been made to enmesh him. It is not intended to deny that the man was not possessed of a peculiar genius which constantly of itself freed him from the dangers to which he was exposed. But beyond this there were instances, not so rare as the world would believe, when his genius failed him, and it was upon these occasions that Providence stepped in and furnished a balance against which it was impossible for human endeavour to prevail. It will never be maintained that in the present case the brigadier had divined an infallible scheme. But, as will be seen, the operation of circumstances so dovetailed with the brigadier's appreciation of the situation, that though no certain opportunity was foreseen of seizing the arch guerilla in his bed, yet there was every promise that he would be forced to play a hand with the trumps against him,—a circumstance which no Boer—not even De Wet—liked or understood. One such a chance had presented itself before, when a senior influence intervened and kept the New Cavalry Brigade from falling upon Strydenburg. In the

present case the intervention was to be made by the elements, and even then the energy and wit of the capable soldier who was in command brought the brigade within an ace of a success which would have made all concerned famous in the history of this war.

At four o'clock the advance-guard opened out on the plain north of Luckhoff, and drew the fire of the observation post on the hills through which the trail to Koffyfontein passes. There would have been no necessity to have cautioned the advance-guard to slowness; and the main body just sauntered on, while commanding officers were asking themselves whether the brigadier was mad or inebriate to plunge into a night march of this character when his object was only to get to Kimberley. The good ladies of Luckhoff watched the last of the transport disappear over the nek into the darkness of gathering night, and then sent their eight-year-old sons or Kaffirs to recall such of their men-folk as lay hid in the neighbouring *caches*, while the observation post sent a galloper to the next point, that the news might be patented that the column had taken the Kimberley road. By sundown the head of the column had made about six miles, and a halt was called to allow the baggage to close up. As soon as it was sufficiently dark the change in direction was made, and the head of the column left the road and plunged into the tractless veldt, it being estimated that a compass bear-

ing due east would bring it by daybreak within easy reach of the parallelogram of hills in which Fauresmith and Jagersfontein lie. But the favour of Providence was withdrawn; the night, which had been born in suffocating heat, suddenly changed to piercing cold, and great zigzags of white lightning, clutching at the heavens like the claws of some gigantic dragon, heralded a tempest of unwonted fury. And presently it came preceded by a blinding sandstorm, which told how much the burnt surface of the prairie yearned for moisture. That night it drank its fill, for when the flood-gates burst asunder a very deluge was loosed upon the earth. The great storm voided its burden in such rivers of water that in a moment, in spite of waterproof and oilskin, every man in the force was as drenched as if he had swum a swollen stream. Nor was it a passing downfall of temporary duration. It deluged in unbroken stream for the best part of an hour. Automatically the whole force came to a standstill: checked, bedraggled, and miserable, they stood it out. To advance was impossible; each depression in the veldt was a sheet of water, in places inches deep. The whole crust of the earth had become a sticky sodden morass, and in this mire the column lay bogged and helpless. Guns and waggons sank axle-deep, their drunken alignment proving that for the time being they were immobile. Horses, mules, and oxen struggled and

floundered for a foothold, sinking with terror-stricken sobs and distressful moans until their bellies were level with the slush. A hideous scene!

There was nothing that man could do: until such time as the natural drainage of the plain and the parched substratum absorbed the superfluous moisture, the brigade was as helpless as a steamer with a broken screw-shaft. Mercifully for the staff, the catastrophe had overtaken the brigade within a mile of a fair-sized farm; and eventually, after much labour in the mire, the brigadier and his immediate following were able to claim its hospitality. Luckily it was occupied. A smiling good-natured *frau*, on the stout side of thirty, with a bevy of girls ranging from two to twelve, was endeavouring to cope with an inundation of sodden troopers from the advance-guard. It was a nice farm, and to our astonishment Madam Embonpoint proved to be an English Afrikander. Her husband was in St Helena, and since the outbreak of war she had worked her husband's property single-handed. Madam was anything but hostile; but she prayed that we would not break into her slender store of provisions, since she had ten mouths to feed, and the pinch of war was near at hand. Otherwise we were welcome to such hospitality as her roof would afford us, and she was prepared to cook and prepare for us any food we might have with us. It chanced that the officer of the advance-guard was a captain

of the Mount Nelson Light Horse. He was one of the few in that corps who had impressed himself favourably upon the brigadier, consequently the chief did not burst into abusive satire when he discovered this officer in the act of boiling a turkey in the farm kitchen. Now, in spite of the wet and disappointment, the brigadier had lost none of his usual gaiety of nature. It is peculiar with the best soldiers, the more adverse the circumstances the lighter their spirits.

Brigadier (commencing to divest himself of his wet clothes in front of the fire, and pointing to the turkey). "Honestly come by?"

Captain (closing the lid of the pot with a snap). "Yes, sir; the last of our tinned food, sir!"

B. "Seen the tin for the first time to-day, I should think. But what are you going to do with it? You have got to clear your robbers out of this. This is my booth for the night!"

C. "I realised that, sir, and I said to my subaltern that as it was a cold night we would just open our last tin and offer it to the general as a sign of affection, arguing that if he accepted it in the spirit in which it was given, he would ask us both to dinner."

B. (now in his shirt). "Hearty fellows both. No man born of woman would like a boiled turkey for dinner more than I should, in spite of the fact that it was only killed an hour ago by a captain who should have known better. You are both

asked to dinner. Madam, had you not better withdraw?" (*This to the lady of the house who had just entered.*)

The scene was indeed a strange one. A rough Boer kitchen lit by a dingy dip. The light of the yellow flame impeded by "truck" suspended from the rafters—a side of mutton, some *biltong*, strings of onions or other roots. In the corner a more or less modern fire-range, in front of which stood a group of officers, comprising the brigadier, his staff, and the two officers of the advance-guard, all in various stages of *déshabillé*, some trying to get warm, some to dry their wringing clothes, and others to stoke the fire and boil a pot. Added to these the plump hostess and her tribe of all-aged daughters, whom no exposure of masculine limbs and under-dress seemed to terrify. This did not look like catching De Wet—but then much may take place between midnight and daybreak.

A chapter could be filled with the miseries which the troops suffered that night, and this being the case, it would be ungracious to dilate upon the sumptuous nature of the feast within the farmhouse. Let it suffice that during its discussion the brigadier cast over the situation and was ready, with the coffee which Madam Embonpoint contributed to the entertainment, with his plan to amend the chaos which the elements had made of his original undertaking.

Brigadier (stirring his cup thoughtfully until the hostess was out of the room). "Mr

Intelligence, what do you make the distance between this and past this side of Fauresmith?"

Intelligence Officer. "Three-to five-and-twenty miles, sir."

B. "Have you any one who knows the way?"

I. O. "Yes, sir, there is a man in the Light Horse who has done some transport riding in the Southern Free State, who says he knows something about it."

B. "Better and better (*turning to the captain of the advance-guard*). Now, I am going to put you in the way of a very big thing. You are senior captain in your corps, are you not?"

Captain. "Yes, sir, senior captain, adjutant, and second in command; we have got no majors!"

B. "That is all right then. Well, I want you to start on at once with two squadrons, and to push on to Fauresmith. I fancy that you will find that it has dried up a bit now, and as these storms are usually local, it is quite possible that you may strike better going as you get along. When you get into the hilly country about Fauresmith, go cunning, try and get as close as you can without being seen, and find a position from which you can hold the road leading from Fauresmith to the Riet River. Come over here and look at the map. Now, if you get off by midnight, you ought to make two miles an hour until daybreak. That is twelve miles; the remaining ten you will do inside two hours. If you are sniped, push on; but if opposed

in force, do your best, only let me know. Now, these are my plans (*pointing on the map*). You see the parallelogram; well, you go slap-bang into it. I shall come along as fast as I can with the ground in this condition. I shall, if you come into touch with the enemy in force, send two squadrons and two guns direct to the bridge over the Riet north of the parallelogram, and two squadrons and two guns south of the parallelogram, while I come on with the rest in your direction. Now, your business is, first, not to let yourself be seen; secondly, so to arrange yourself that if De Wet and his crowd get to Fauresmith before we are up, to manœuvre and keep him there until we arrive. It is a difficult job, I allow; but I know that you are the man to make the best of it. Get your men to understand that they have now the opportunity of retrieving all the odium existing against them. The brigade-major will give you all this in writing. You may pick your squadrons. Now, get along, and don't waste time!"

While the two squadrons of Mount Nelson Light Horse were picking their way out of camp that night, and while the rest of the brigade was turning into its miserable bivouac, the staff "bedded down" in the drawing-room of the farmhouse. With so large a family of girls, good Madam Embonpoint could only arrange one spare bedroom, and that was reserved for the brigadier; but the rest dragged their

sopping valises into the parlour and trusted to get five hours' sleep before a daylight start. . . .

To add to the chagrin of the brigade, and to further demonstrate the singular Providence which ever seemed to attend De Wet and his movements even at the eleventh hour, it was found that the force had bivouacked on the very fringe of the storm. As is so often the case with these South African storms, the rigour of the downfall was local, and while the brigade had been so badly caught that it was practically impossible for the teams to move the guns without the aid of drag-ropes, half a mile away the surface of the veldt was unaffected and the going good. But this discovery caused the day to dawn with brighter prospects, and as soon as the sodden column, free of its transport, felt the sounder bottom, it shook itself as would a retriever after a swim, and settled down to a swinging drying-trot. The brigadier had theories on the methods to be employed in the kind of war-game with which he was confronted; and he determined, if possible, to be in front of the Boer pickets and observation-posts, realising that two circumstances were in his favour. The concentration ordered for Philipolis should have reduced the strength of the Boer watchmen, and the rain of the preceding night, while rendering sentinels less inclined for the bitter vigil of early morning, had laid the tell-tale dust, which, as a rule,

is the greatest impediment to secret movement. He threw out a troop to go very wide on either flank, in order to serve the double purpose of capturing any shirking Boer pickets which might chance to be alarmed at the later arrival of the transport column, and of guarding against De Wet's commando slipping past across the back trail. As the daylight strengthened, and showed that the going improved, everything pointed to a successful ride on the part of the two squadrons which had been pushed forward in the night. By seven o'clock the men had begun to dry, and as the object of the hunt leaked out, a general improvement was apparent in the spirits of the force.

The first information which came in to headquarters, as the whole force moved rapidly forward, came from the Basuto scout, whom the Intelligence officer had relieved of his obligations to the Intelligence guide as soon as the latter had been dismissed. His information was serious: he reported that a party of twenty-five Boers had crossed our trail just about eight o'clock, and, travelling fast, had gone in a north-easterly direction. The brigadier cross-examined the man closely, and seemed satisfied as to the truth of his story.

Brigadier (turning to his staff)
"We shall be fairly in it, if we

have any luck. I don't think that these fellows who have passed behind us are De Wet's actual advance-guard. They are probably a patrol that he has thrown out to look after his exposed flank. He knows that we were at Luckhoff, and he would not have moved without telling off some one to watch us. Now, these people have seen us and passed behind us; but as we have luckily struck and covered the trail of the advance squadrons, they don't know that we have a force six hours ahead of us. Probably they have sent back to De Wet, who will be from one to two hours'¹ distant from them, to inform him, if he puts a spurt on, he can be through the Fauresmith passes before us. If only the Mount Nelsons can hold him, we shall get him yet."

By nine o'clock the Fauresmith hills began to loom up above the dead level of the veldt, and as the trail of the advance squadrons was still steady and we had no news of them, there was every reason to be satisfied that they had successfully made their goal. The situation at least was increasing in interest. A little after ten the column had reached the foot of the Fauresmith hills, and the brigadier wisely called a halt, determined not to commit his troops to the hilly tracts until he had heard something from his advance squadrons.

¹ De Wet never moved without an advance-, flank-, and rear-guard, removed from him to a distance of about six to eight miles. This screen always gave him ample notice of any British troops in the vicinity, thus enabling him to change his direction and suit his action with calmness and deliberation. These screens were always composed of picked men.

But the next information regarding the enemy was not destined to come in from the advance-guard. The column had just off-saddled when a dishevelled trooper with a blanched face galloped up to the tiny group of trees beneath which the brigadier and his staff had dismounted.

Brigadier. "Hullo, here's a man who has seen his own ghost. We shall have some news now. Who are you?"

Trooper. "Please, sir, I belong to Mr Crauford's patrol—it has been annihilated!"

B. (*soothingly*). "Now dismount, and tell us all about it. What do you belong to!"

T. (*dismounting*). "Mount Nelson Light Horse, sir,"

B. "I thought so; now let us have the story."

T. "Well, sir, there was Mr Crauford, and Sergeant Mullins, and——"

B. "Never mind their names. How many men had Mr Crauford with him?"

T. "About six, sir; and I am the only one left alive to tell the tale!"

B. "How truly awful! and if you don't get on with it your tale will outlast all of us as well. (*Roughly*) Now, throw it out,—what happened?"

T. "Well, sir, you see that farm over there (*pointing to low seam of grey hills about four miles distant on our left flank, at the bottom of which nestled a homestead*), we were riding up to it quiet-like, when suddenly, as we were passing a kraal, up jumps about fifty Boers and calls us to 'ands up.' We wouldn't 'ands up,' and they

shot us down to a man, and——!"

B. "Wait—how did you get away from the general battue?"

T. "I don't exactly know, sir; I kind of found myself galloping for all I was worth, and the bullets just 'umming that thick and awful, that I kept on asking myself the whole way home 'ow it was I managed to escape!"

B. "You may go. Stop! where's your rifle?"

T. (*for the first time realising that he had not got a rifle*). "I must have dropped it, sir, in the scrimmage—it was awful 'ot, sir!"

B. (*brutally*). "Off you go; you ought to be ashamed to talk to honest men. (*Then turning to the brigade-major.*) Look here, Baker, though I don't believe the man's story *in toto*, or would believe any man who in panic had thrown his rifle away, yet something has happened, and either our men on the left have fallen in with the party of Boers who crossed our trail this morning, or we have let slip the whole 'bag of tricks,' and De Wet is through us. Just you take another squadron of the Mount Nelsons and see what has happened on the left. You can also take the pom-pom. Unless the enemy are in strength don't stay out there long, as I shall probably move on before you are back. Anyway I shall leave a signal-station on the hill above us!"

Brigade-Major. "Very good, sir."

B. "Wait a moment. As the rain-storm has dished my

original plans, I shall probably, as soon as I hear from Fauresmith, send half my force direct to the Kalabas bridge, and take the rest to support the Mount Nelson squadrons. But I can make no definite statement until I have some idea of De Wet's force. Gad! I wish I knew where Plumer might be at this moment, or whether there is any one behind De Wet. Without information or maps, this is an uphill game!" . . .

In half an hour the brigade-major's little command was within a thousand yards of Liebenbergspan farm. Here they met five woe-begone men tramping wearily towards them. They were the rest of Crauford's patrol, stripped of most of their clothing, and desired by the Boers to make their way back to their column with all compliments of the season. The subaltern was very dejected, for he was a boy of the right spirit; and it is a strain upon one's dignity as an officer to be turned loose on the veldt with only a flannel shirt as a dress, and a pair of putties tied round the feet in the place of boots. It was not his fault: he had sent on a man to reconnoitre the farm. This man was our friend who had come in in the morning. As he failed to search the kraal, the Boers had let him past, and had waited for the main body of the patrol, which they had "held up" at short range. The scout, who had passed through them, heard the shouts of "Hands up!" and galloping for dear life, had been able

to get clear and pitch the brigadier his terror-bred fable. Apart from taking their clothes, the Boers had treated their prisoners well. They were a party of fifteen men, very poorly clad but well mounted, under a commandant of the name of Theron. Crauford, who was a young English Africander, had, while a prisoner, made good use of his time. His captors did not realise that he understood Dutch, and he had gleaned from their conversation that they were, as the brigadier had anticipated, part of De Wet's screen. They were very much upset at the size of the British column, and had not been prepared for its presence so close to De Wet's line of advance. But as they discussed it among themselves they considered that De Wet would be in front of the column, proving that they had no knowledge of the two squadrons which had gone on. All this was such valuable information that Baker dismounted a man and sent Crauford back to the brigadier as fast as he could gallop. He himself kept on, as Theron's party was still in occupation of the farm.

The farm stood at the foot of a low brae. It was only a rise, and as the Boers appeared to take no notice of our approach, not even troubling to efface their presence, the brigade-major determined, under cover of his pom-pom, to gallop over it. Half a squadron on the right, half a squadron on the left. He

called up the captain commanding the squadron and gave him his instructions. The man at once began to make difficulties, and suggested a different mode of attack.

Brigade-Major (severely). "I have told you what I want you to do. Kindly go and instruct your troop-leaders. As soon as you are extended, canter, and improve your pace when you get sufficiently near. That knoll on the right and the rise on the left both command the farm, and you will find that the enemy won't stand. Good Heavens! man (*as the captain again began to demur*), there are only about twenty of them; surely you are not afraid!"

The man did not mean going, neither did his squadron. They dallied over extending, and it was quite a quarter of an hour before they began to move forward. The brigade-major dashed to the head of the right half-squadron and tried to infuse some little enthusiasm into them. But no; it was the very worst squadron of the Mount Nelsons, and when the brigade-major commenced to gallop he found that he was only followed by four men. But this even, added to half a belt from the pom-pom, was sufficient for the Boers; they ran to their horses, which were gazing by the kraal, mounted, and galloped over the rise, without firing a shot. As vultures swoop down upon carrion, so the Mount Nelsons, as soon as it was seen that the rise was clear of the enemy, swarmed

down to the looting of the farm. The brigade-major's face was a study when he and the Mount Nelsons' captain met in the verandah. All that he said would not add to the artistic sense of this narrative; but he closed his remarks with the following: "If I catch a man of your regiment touching a single article in this farm I will shoot him myself. Get your men back to their positions, sir. They won't fight; I'll be d——d if they shall loot!"

In war situations develop rapidly, and the brigade-major had barely dismissed his now sulking junior, when a silver glitter from above the halting-place of the brigade brought the laconic message, "Return at once without delay." Precisely at the same moment, a messenger came dashing down from the rise above the farm, and excitedly reported that a long line of Cape-carts was rapidly crossing the left front. The brigade-major started the squadron back at a trot, and stayed behind for a few moments to make an investigation of the new development. It was quite true, six Cape-carts and about thirty men were crossing his front from right to left at a good pace. They were a long way off, and even if he had not had peremptory orders to return, it would have been hopeless to have attempted to pursue them with such material as he had in hand.

Brigade-Major (snapping his glasses back into their case). "You may put it down, Mr Intelligence, in that voluminous

diary of yours, that our quarry has escaped. They have slipped us. Come along; we must canter on and see what the brigadier has in pickle for us!"

But, as subsequent events were to prove, the brigade-major for once was in error. . . .

We found the brigadier impatiently awaiting us, with half the battery hooked in, and the 20th Dragoons standing to their horses. He did not wait for rest or explanation; but as soon as we cantered in with the pom-pom, gave the order for the column to advance. The mule-convoy had come in in our absence, and it had orders to follow us as best it could.

Brigadier. "Look here, you fellows; I really am sanguine for the first time since I have been engaged in this kind of 'follow your leader.' Just about half an hour after you left, our friend the turkey-expert of last night sent in a red-hot man with a message that he had held up the main body of a Boer commando in a pass just west of Fauresmith. He wasn't in position to stop the advance-guard, which went through with about six Cape-carts; but he had since captured the Boer picket on the pass and had turned the main body—consisting of about thirty Cape-carts and 400 burghers—back, and when he wrote they were halted in Fauresmith."

Brigade-Major. "We have seen that advance-guard. But is there no other way by which the Boers could get to the Riet: by swinging round between Fauresmith and Jagersfontein, for instance?"

B. "We can't hope that he will stay and wait for us in Fauresmith. Of course there will be a way round; but he may delay, he may try and force his way past the turkey-expert, and then we may be there first. I sent Goven on with the 21st and two guns at once to strike a bee-line for Kalabas bridge—to reck for nothing, only to get there. But we have neither guides nor maps that can give one any idea of the true lie of the country. I could only give him the direction and the ordinary inaccurate sheet-map."

B.-M. "And what do you intend doing yourself, sir?"

B. "We will just push on hell-for-leather for the position which the turkey-expert is holding; and then if he is being attacked, and wind and tide will allow it, we will just hurl ourselves into ole man De Wet, smother him, or perish in the attempt."

The hills about Fauresmith differ little in formation from the general character obtaining in South Africa. They divide the veldt into a series of rough parallelograms. The brigadier had estimated that we were distant from Fauresmith only about four or five miles, while the inaccurate map showed that when the 21st Dragoon Guards had started, they only had about eight miles to cover before they would reach the Kalabas bridge over the Riet. Therefore the brigadier was satisfied that if he was able to stop the bridge with the 21st and get touch with De Wet's main body before dark, he

could deal with him with the force he had kept in hand. But it would be absolutely essential to gain touch that night, and once having gained it, to push through to a conclusion at once. The interior of the first parallelogram allowed the force to advance with an extended front, and six miles of smart trotting brought it to Brandewijnskuil, where the Fauresmith road passes over a stream tributary to the Riet. To the east of this drift, between it and Fauresmith, rise the glaxis-like slopes of Groenkloof—well named, for the whole country here is green, and the immediate neighbourhood of the drift is not unlike many rural spots to be found in Surrey. Bushed as with a hedgerow, the road sinks into the drift, to appear again on the far side, cutting its way between a rough-edged turf upon which geese and goats are browsing. To the left stands a whitewashed cottage, with a corral of stunted shrub and a tree or two. Beside it, in a creeper-grown shed, are the appliances of a blacksmith's craft—yes, just for the moment it might well be Surrey. But we have no time to stay and admire or to soliloquise over scenery. There is men's work ahead. A mounted messenger is dashing down the track in front of us, as if hell and a thousand devils had been loosed behind him. He hands a scrap of paper to the brigade-major, and then throws himself from his horse, which stands motionless with heaving sides and dripping flanks.

Brigadier. "Read it. Who is it from?"

Brigade-Major. "From the officer in command of the two squadrons of Mount Nelsons. He says: 'Groen Kloof, 3.15 P.M.—Boers about 200 strong demonstrated against me, while the convoy made a circle round out of range to north-east. I was unable to prevent this. Convoy is going as fast as it can due north. You could cut it off. Am holding this until you reinforce. No casualties; have six prisoners.'"

Brigadier (taking out his watch). "It is now 3.40. Goven started at 1.30; he ought to be at the bridge well in front of those coves. If he is, we've got 'em. Here, Baker; take the rest of this crush straight for the north-east corner of this sheet of the map. As soon as you reach the corner, make a right angle, steer north-west, and you ought to come out just on the tail of Brother and his Cape-carts. Now, off you go; report to Colonel Washington, but I shall expect you to keep the show going. Gad! it's the chance of the campaign, if the Riet is still in flood!"

B.-M. "Very good, sir. But where will you be?"

B. "I shall be here. This is where the transport will outspan to-night. I shall keep the turkey-expert up on the top of Groen Kloof all to-night, in case Brother tries to break back that way! But wherever you find the enemy, go for him bald-headed: it is the only chance!"

B.-M. "But if I find that

he has crossed the river? If the other column should not be in position?"

B. (*deliberately*) "If they have got across the Reit, come back at once with your tail between your legs. Pursuit in those circumstances would be useless. But use your own discretion if it comes to a near thing. Tell Freddy that you've my instructions to fight; you and Freddy ought to be able to convince Washington, and Twine, his second in command, is fighting stuff. Good-bye, and good luck to you; spare neither man nor beast. (*As the brigade-major rode off, the brigadier turned to the Intelligence officer.*) Now, Mr Intelligence, I want you also to make yourself useful. I want you if possible to get to Goven and acquaint him of the situation. It is of vital importance that he should know how the force behind him is distributed. Even if they are attacking him at the bridge, do your utmost to get to him: the best of forces present flanks that are possible to single men. Just tell him that Washington with half the force is bearing down upon the bridge from the north-east; that Groen Kloof is held by our own coves; that I am here with the baggage, and its escort of sick, blind, halt, and lame; that if Washington gets into them, he is to leave just enough men to make the bridge secure, and hurl his hoplites in to the help of Washington. Now, ride cunning; you may have a difficult job. I should keep well to the left. Good-bye, and good luck to you. Ride cunning!" . . .

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The Intelligence officer rode out on his lonely mission. Luckily he had changed his horse after the affair at Liebenbergspan, and being well mounted, he felt fairly confident. He first steered due north, hoping to strike off the *spoor* of Goven's column. But when after four miles he failed to strike it, he opined that he was making a detour which, if persevered in, would not bring him to his destination by night-fall. He therefore changed his direction to due north, and put spurs to his horse. He was working along the inner edge of a great veldt-basin, and getting a little uncomfortable as to his direction, and alarmed that he saw no traces of the column, he dismounted in a kloof, and climbed to the top of the edge of the basin. Beneath him lay a track, standing out white against the veldt. There was just a short breadth of veldt, and then the country became very broken and hilly. Within two hundred yards of the spot which he had chosen for his reconnaissance stood a small farmhouse. But it was not the farmhouse that attracted his attention; it was a pillar of dust which showed to the north along the track. He took out his glasses. There was no doubt about it,—it was a body of mounted men and some transport going away from him. They were not more than a mile away; and if it had not been for the dust, he could almost have counted the force. "It is De Wet," he inwardly reflected; "he is going right into Goven's arms; and for

3 A

Boers to make all that dust, they must be travelling fast." He turned his glasses down to the south; there he could find no sign of living thing upon the track. He was just debating in his mind what would be the right course to pursue, when he heard a voice behind him, "Beg pardon, sir, but them is Boers; they have just all gone past here!" He turned round to find a British dragoon standing stiffly to attention behind him.

Intelligence Officer. "Who are you? and where the devil have you come from?"

Trooper. "Please, sir, we belong to a patrol that was sent out by Captain Charles, and we got lost."

I. O. "Where are the others? where are your horses?"

T. "I have got the three horses down in the nullah there. The corporal and the other man are down in that farm, sir; at least that is where they went before the Boers came."

I. O. "In that farm? Why, the Boers will have got them; they must have passed quite close to the farm!"

T. "They did that, sir; but I never seed them get them. I expect that they was under the beds when the Boers passed."

I. O. "Did you see all the Boers pass?"

T. "Yes, sir; there was about a thousand, two waggons, and a lot of carts. Some was riding horses, and others riding in the carts."

I. O. "Were they going fast?"

T. "Yes, sir; just as fast as they could, shouting and swear-

ing and calling to each other. They seemed dreadful pressed for time!"

I. O. "We had better see if those other fellows of yours are still in the farm. Have you got your rifle loaded?"

The Intelligence officer and trooper walked down to the little homestead, and as they approached the door out stepped the two most scared and astonished dragoons that South Africa has ever seen. They were escorted out by a bevy of smiling girls. When they saw their comrade safe and sound in the company of an officer, they became absolutely nonplussed. But the Intelligence officer got the following history out of the corporal:—

Corporal. "Well, sir, we were sent off as a patrol on the right flank, and somehow among the kopjes we lost touch, and about an hour ago we reached this place. I left the horses under cover with Smith, and I took one man and went to reconnoitre the farm. We found this nice old lady inside, who speaks English; and she told us that she hadn't seen any English troops, but that a small party of Boers had passed in the morning, who had stopped and had some coffee, but who seemed to be in a hurry. The good lady asked us if we would have some coffee. Well, sir, we were very thirsty and hungry-like, so we sat down, and they gave us some coffee and cake and things; and just as we were eating, the old lady rushed in and said the Boers were coming, and hustled us into a small bedroom. Well,

sir, we looked through the window, spy-like, and there, sure enough, were about ten Boers on horses galloping past the house. They were mostly quite young boys, but there were some greybeards amongst them. They seemed in a great hurry, for only one just stopped at the house, and he only stayed a moment. Then more and more passed, riding along in no formation, and all seeming in a hurry. Just one or two turned aside and had a word with the people of the house, but none of them got off their horses. Then an ambulance-waggon came by, and quite a string of Cape-carts: the last cart had four horses in it, driven by a nigger, and it stopped quite five minutes at the farm. Two men, who kept on shouting orders to the passing Boers, were sitting in the back of it——"

Intelligence Officer. "What were they like?"

C. "One was a stout man with a long black beard; the other had a grey beard and puffy eyes. The people here now tell us that they were Steyn and De Wet."

I. O. "Why the devil didn't you shoot them?"

Trooper (coming to his comrade's aid). "How was we to know, sir, as how they were generals? they just looked two comfortable old civie blokes. Besides, we had left our rifles standing in the next room!"

I. O. "How many Boers would you say went by?"

C. "I should say four or five hundred, sir; they was going by in dribblets for the best part of half an hour."

I. O. "Who are the people in this house? I can't understand their attitude in screening you here. You have had the most remarkable experience. What an opportunity!"

C. "The lady, sir, is an Irish lady, and she is a very good friend to her countrymen!"

The Intelligence officer then cross-examined the owner of the farm, and she corroborated all that the corporal had said. Both De Wet and Steyn were in the four-horsed cart. They asked her if she had seen any *kharkis* recently; about the state of the Riet river, and the distance to Kalabas bridge; and before driving off impressed upon her the necessity of putting any of the English off the scent who might be following. As they drove away De Wet shouted back, "They are close behind." This information raised the Intelligence officer to a high standard of excitement, for he now felt sure that the brigade was well in upon the right scent. Already he found himself listening for the sound of Goven's guns. Collecting the three troopers who had been nearer to the person of De Wet than other armed Britishers had for some time, he turned back into the veldt basin and pushed forward northwards. The sun was now nearly down, but that was nothing: buoyed by a great excitement, the Intelligence officer was now possessed of only one idea, and that was to be in at the death. But a bitter disappointment was in store for him.

Corporal (pointing to the left

rear). "Please, sir, there is the column."

The Intelligence officer could scarcely believe his eyes—the thought was too appalling, too ghastly to be true. It was true, nevertheless. Instead of arriving at the bridge, the column had lost direction, and, without an adequate guide or map, had become entangled among the hills. Lost, without forage or food, beast and man weary beyond expression, while De Wet was crossing the Riet over Kalabas bridge, the stop which should have been there was endeavouring to retrace its steps back to camp. At the moment that the Intelligence officer realised the truth great tears welled up to his eyes.

It was midnight before the mess servants could turn out a meal at Brandewijnskuil for the staff. Two doleful candles but added to the depression bred of the hour and the disappointment which was uppermost in every mind. We had had our chance and failed. The brigadier alone was philosophic: his natural gaiety would not allow of depression; his manly spirit would not

collapse against the ruling of the laws of chance.

Brigadier. "Wake up, you coves, and come and have some dinner. We have lost ole man De Wet; but that is no reason for you all to behave as if we were in for a funeral. Thank Heaven that you are alive. You would probably have all been scuppered if we had got up with the ole man. He would have fought until he was blue in the face!"

Brigade-Major. "I've got the orders out, sir. Start at 3 A.M.!"

Brigadier. "That's all right, but we won't see any more of De Wet. We were too hot on him to-day. All we shall find when we cross the Riet at daybreak to-morrow will be *spoor* leading in every direction. They will dissolve to a certainty. But though we have failed, we have had a run for our money, and finished a d——d good second. But no maps and no guide are big things as penalties go, and, all considered, I think that the 'crush' has run devilish well. What have your prisoners got to say, Mr Intelligence?"

But Mr Intelligence, having drunk his soup, was sound asleep in his blankets. . . .

L'ENVOI.

With the crossing of the bridge before daybreak, prepared, if a tangible enemy was still in front, to take up the running again and pursue the line to an end, no matter the cost.¹ But the soft ground on

¹ The orders issued this night to the brigade were very instructive, and showed what a real soldier the brigadier was. If he considered that the cir-

the far side of the river gave evidence of thirty trails. The commando had scattered to the winds, and with cunning foresight De Wet and his following had removed every living soul, Boer or Kafir, from the vicinity of the bridge, so that no evidence of his presence remained. To pursue a fugitive in a solitary Cape cart with a brigade would have been absurd, and so, when five miles on at Openbaar there was no sign of the solitary tracks again converging, the chase was abandoned, and the brigade halted to await the arrival of its mule and ox convoy. That evening Plumer, who had detrained at Jagersfontein road, crossed the Kalabas bridge and reported Haig to be in rear of him at the Spitz Kopjes. It will be seen therefore that Plumer was twenty-four hours too late, through no fault of his, be it said, but simply because he made the journey from Orange River station by train. Plumer pushed on upon the conjectured

De Wet trail, which he still considered hot enough to follow. He lost it, as the brigadier had foreseen, in the vicinity of Abraham's Kraal. The new cavalry brigade moved more slowly into Bloemfontein by way of Petrusburg and the historic field of Driefontein.

At Bloemfontein some changes took place in the staff and composition of the brigade, and the writer of these papers, to his infinite regret, severed his connection with the brigade. He had been promoted into a new battalion which was being raised at home, and after twenty months his turn had come to say good-bye to the veldt. As the brigadier bade him farewell in the Bloemfontein Club he clapped him good-naturedly on the back, saying, "I believe that it is all a hoax this story of yours about instructions to proceed home by the first transport. I don't believe that you will ever get farther South than that farm at Richmond Road!"

cumstances demanded an effort he was prepared to take any risk and to make every sacrifice. The orders stated that if it became necessary to pursue, the convoy could be sent back by the shortest route to the railway, that the mounted men would have to live on the country without supply, and such men whose horses gave in would have to walk east against the course of the sun, which line, after 20 to 25 miles, would bring them to the railway, where they could stop the first passing train.

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Brigadier. "That's all right, but we won't see any more of De Wet. We were too hot on him to-day. All we shall find when we cross the Riet at daybreak to-morrow will be *spoor* leading in every direction. They will dissolve to a certainty. But though we have failed, we have had a run for our money, and finished a d——d good second. But no maps and no guide are big things as penalties go, and, all considered, I think that the 'crush' has run devilish well. What have your prisoners got to say, Mr Intelligence?"

But Mr Intelligence, having drunk his soup, was sound asleep in his blankets. . . .

L'ENVOI.

With the crossing of the Riet the history of this De Wet hunt ceases, for everything came to pass precisely as the brigadier had foreseen. The brigade arrived at Kalabas

bridge before daybreak, prepared, if a tangible enemy was still in front, to take up the running again and pursue the line to an end, no matter the cost.¹ But the soft ground on

¹ The orders issued this night to the brigade were very instructive, and showed what a real soldier the brigadier was. If he considered that the cir-

the far side of the river gave evidence of thirty trails. The commando had scattered to the winds, and with cunning foresight De Wet and his following had removed every living soul, Boer or Kafir, from the vicinity of the bridge, so that no evidence of his presence remained. To pursue a fugitive in a solitary Cape cart with a brigade would have been absurd, and so, when five miles on at Openbaar there was no sign of the solitary tracks again converging, the chase was abandoned, and the brigade halted to await the arrival of its mule and ox convoy. That evening Plumer, who had detrained at Jagersfontein road, crossed the Kalabas bridge and reported Haig to be in rear of him at the Spitz Kopjes. It will be seen therefore that Plumer was twenty-four hours too late, through no fault of his, be it said, but simply because he made the journey from Orange River station by train. Plumer pushed on upon the conjectured

De Wet trail, which he still considered hot enough to follow. He lost it, as the brigadier had foreseen, in the vicinity of Abraham's Kraal. The new cavalry brigade moved more slowly into Bloemfontein by way of Petrusburg and the historic field of Driefontein.

At Bloemfontein some changes took place in the staff and composition of the brigade, and the writer of these papers, to his infinite regret, severed his connection with the brigade. He had been promoted into a new battalion which was being raised at home, and after twenty months his turn had come to say good-bye to the veldt. As the brigadier bade him farewell in the Bloemfontein Club he clapped him good-naturedly on the back, saying, "I believe that it is all a hoax this story of yours about instructions to proceed home by the first transport. I don't believe that you will ever get farther South than that farm at Richmond Road!"

circumstances demanded an effort he was prepared to take any risk and to make every sacrifice. The orders stated that if it became necessary to pursue, the convoy could be sent back by the shortest route to the railway, that the mounted men would have to live on the country without supply, and such men whose horses gave in would have to walk east against the course of the sun, which line, after 20 to 25 miles, would bring them to the railway, where they could stop the first passing train.

rear). 'Please, sir, there is the column.'

The Intelligence officer could scarcely believe his eyes—the thought was too appalling, too ghastly to be true. It was true, nevertheless. Instead of arriving at the bridge, the column had lost direction, and, without an adequate guide or map, had become entangled among the hills. Lost, without forage or food, beast and man weary beyond expression, while De Wet was crossing the Riet over Kalabas bridge, the stop which should have been there was endeavouring to retrace its steps back to camp. At the moment that the Intelligence officer realised the truth great tears welled up to his eyes.

It was midnight before the mess servants could turn out a meal at Brandewijnskuil for the staff. Two doleful candles but added to the depression bred of the hour and the disappointment which was uppermost in every mind. We had had our chance and failed. The brigadier alone was philosophic: his natural gaiety would not allow of depression; his manly spirit would not

collapse against the ruling of the laws of chance.

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THE DREAM.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

'Twas morn, and through the shutters' chinks the sun
Across the loggia sent the dawn's first rays
Into my darkened chamber. There, at that hour
When sleep her lightest and her sweetest shades
Pours on our eyelids, lo, before me stood,
And on me riveted her gaze, the form
Of her who taught me first the lore of love,
And after left me to bewail her loss.
Not dead she seem'd to me, but sad her look,
Sad, as of such as are unhappy. She
Press'd her right hand upon my head and sigh'd.
"Dost live," she said, "and some remembrance bear
Of me?" "Whence, loveliest, dearest, hast thou come,"
I said, "and how? How great my grief has been,
And is for thee! Nor did I think that thou
Shouldst ever know of it; and this it was
That made my misery more hard to bear.
Art come but to desert me once again?
'Tis that I fear. How has it been with thee?
Art what I knew thee first? What inward pang
Disquiets thee?" "Oblivion," she replied,
"Deadens thy thoughts, and sleep confuses them.
For I am dead, and many a month hath past,
Since last thou lookedst on me." At these words
A pang unspeakable struck to my heart.
"Cut off," so she went on, "even in the flower
Of youth, when 'tis most sweet to live, and ere
The heart has taught itself that human hopes
Are phantoms all. Well may he long for death,
To whom it brings release from all his cares,
Or the sick wretch, who nears his journey's end;
But to the young death is unmingled grief,
And cruel is her fate, whose dawning hopes

Are crushed and buried in the tomb. We ne'er
Can know what nature shuts away from those,
Who no experience have of life; and grief,
Blind grief, weighs very heavily on such
As wisdom has not ripen'd." "Oh, my love,
Unhappy darling, peace! oh, peace!" I cried;
"How dost thou rack my heart in speaking thus!
Oh, my beloved! Art thou truly dead,
And I still living on? And was it, then,
Decreed in heaven that thy so tender frame
Should undergo the agony supreme,
While this poor miserable husk of mine
Should linger on unharm'd? Woes me! how oft,
When I shall call to mind thou art no more,
And that I never in this world shall meet
With thee again, shall I reject the thought?
Ah me! ah me! What is this thing called death?
What 'tis, fain would I learn by very proof,
And from the ruthless enmity of fate
Shield my defenceless head. Though I be young,
Yet does my youth consume and waste away,
As though my years were many. Mine old age
I dread, for though 'tis far enough from me,
Yet is the difference trivial 'twixt it
And my youth's prime." "For sorrow we were born,"
She said, "we two. No ray of happiness
Smiled on our lives, and heaven a pleasure took
In our distresses." "Since tears dimm'd mine eyes,
And took the colour from my cheeks, because
Of thy departure," I rejoined, "and since
Within my heart I bear a load of grief,
Tell me, did ever any spark of love,
Or pity for thy wretched lover touch
Thy heart whilst thou wert living? I the while
Pined day and night betwixt despair and hope;
And to this hour my mind is rack'd by vain
Uncertainty. If ever, if but once,
Thou hast felt sorrow for my darkened life,
Oh, hide it not from me, and let the thought
'Thou didst!' sustain me, now that from our years
The future has been reft." Then she replied,

"Poor soul, be comforted! I grudged thee not
My pity while I lived, nor do I now;
For I was wretched too. Make no complaint
Of her that was unhappy most of maids."
"By our disastrous lot, and by the love
That wastes me still, by the beloved name
Of youth, and the lost hopes of days gone by,
Grant, my beloved, that I touch thy hand!"
Then with a gesture beautiful and sad
She held it out, and while I covered it
With kisses, and, all trembling with delight,
To my panting bosom press'd it, while big drops
Streamed on my brow and breast, my voice was choked,
My eyeballs reel'd and quivered as I gazed.
Fixing her eyes full tenderly on mine,
"Dear one," she said, "hast thou so soon forgot
That I of all my beauty am bereft?
And thou, oh hapless one, art still aflame
With passion! Now, for the last time, Farewell!
Henceforth our wretched souls and bodies are
Sundered for evermore. Thou livest not,
Nor shalt hereafter live for me. The troth
That thou didst pledge to me fate has annulled."
Then struggling in my anguish to cry out,
With spasms convulsed, my eyelids drench'd with tears,
I started from my sleep. Still did her form
Hover before my eyes, and in the sun's
Uncertain light methought I saw her still.

THE END OF THE TETHER.¹

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

XII.

MR VAN WYK, the white man of Batu Beru, an ex-naval officer who, for reasons best known to himself, had thrown away the promise of a brilliant career to become the pioneer of tobacco-planting on that remote part of the coast, had learned to like Captain Whalley. The appearance of the new skipper had attracted his attention. Nothing more unlike all the diverse types he had seen succeeding each other on the bridge of the *Sofala* could be imagined.

At that time Batu Beru was not what it has become since: the centre of a prosperous tobacco-growing district, a tropically suburban-looking little settlement of bungalows in one long street shaded with two rows of trees, embowered by the flowering and trim luxuriance of the gardens, with a three-mile-long carriage-road for the afternoon drives and a first-class Resident with a fat, cheery wife to lead the society of married estate-managers and unmarried young fellows in the service of the big companies.

All this prosperity was not yet; and Mr Van Wyk prospered alone on the left bank on his deep clearing carved out of the forest, which came down above and below to the water's

edge. His lonely bungalow faced across the river the houses of the Sultan: a restless and melancholy old ruler who had done with love and war, for whom life no longer held any savour (except of evil forebodings) and time never had any value. He was afraid of death, and hoped he would die before the white men were ready to take his country from him. He crossed the river frequently (with never less than ten boats crammed full of people), in the wistful hope of extracting some information on the subject from his own white man. There was a certain chair on the verandah he always took: the dignitaries of the court squatted on the rugs and skins between the furniture: the inferior people remained below on the grass plot between the house and the river in rows three or four deep all along the front. Not seldom the visit began at daybreak. Mr Van Wyk tolerated these inroads. He would nod out of his bedroom window, toothbrush or razor in hand, or pass through the throng of courtiers in his bathing robe. He appeared and disappeared humming a tune, polished his nails with attention, rubbed his shaved face with Eau-de-

¹ Copyrighted in the U.S.A. by Joseph Conrad.

Cologne, drank his early tea, went out to see his coolies at work: returned, looked through some papers on his desk, read a page or two in a book or sat before his cottage piano leaning back on the stool, his arms extended, fingers on the keys, his body swaying slightly from side to side. When absolutely forced to speak he gave evasive vaguely soothing answers out of pure compassion: the same feeling perhaps made him so lavishly hospitable with the aerated drinks that more than once he left himself without soda-water for a whole week. That old man had granted him as much land as he cared to have cleared: it was neither more nor less than a fortune.

Whether it was fortune or seclusion from his kind that Mr Van Wyk sought, he could not have pitched upon a better place. Even the mail-boats of the subsidised company calling on the veriest clusters of palm-thatched hovels along the coast steamed past the mouth of Batu Beru river far away in the offing. The contract was old: perhaps in a few years' time, when it had expired, Batu Beru would be included in the service; meantime all Mr Van Wyk's mail was addressed to Malacca, whence his agent sent it across once a-month by the *Sofala*. It followed that whenever Massy had run short of money (through taking too many lottery tickets), or got into a difficulty about a skipper, Mr Van Wyk was deprived of his letters and newspapers. In so far he had a personal in-

terest in the fortunes of the *Sofala*. Though he considered himself a hermit (and for no passing whim evidently, since he had stood eight years of it already), he liked to know what went on in the world.

Handy on the verandah upon a walnut *étagère* (it had come last year by the *Sofala*—everything came by the *Sofala*) there lay, piled up under bronze weights, a pile of the 'Times' weekly edition, the large sheets of the 'Rotterdam Courant,' the 'Graphic' in its world-wide green wrappers, an illustrated Dutch publication without a cover, the numbers of a German magazine with covers of the "Bismark malade" colour. There were also parcels of new music—though the piano (it had come years ago by the *Sofala*) in the damp atmosphere of the forests was generally out of tune. It was vexing to be cut off from everything for sixty days at a stretch sometimes, without any means of knowing what was the matter. And when the *Sofala* reappeared Mr Van Wyk would descend the steps of the verandah and stroll over the grass plot in front of his house, down to the water-side, with a frown on his white brow.

"You've been laid up after an accident, I presume."

He addressed the bridge, but before anybody could answer Massy was sure to have already scrambled ashore over the rail and pushed in, squeezing the palms of his hands together, bowing his sleek head as if gummed all over the top with black threads and tapes. And

he would be so enraged at the necessity of having to offer such an explanation that his moaning would be positively pitiful, while all the time he tried to compose his big lips into a smile.

"No, Mr Van Wyk. You would not believe it. I couldn't get one of those wretches to take the ship out. Not a single one of the lazy beasts could be induced, and the law, you know, Mr Van Wyk . . ."

He moaned at great length apologetically; the words conspiracy, plot, envy, came out prominently, whined with greater energy. Mr Van Wyk, examining with a faint grimace his polished finger-nails, would say, "H'm. Very unfortunate," and turn his back on him.

Fastidious, clever, slightly sceptical, accustomed to the best society (he had held a much-envied shore appointment at the Ministry of Marine for a year preceding his retreat from his profession and from Europe), he possessed a latent warmth of feeling and a capacity for sympathy which were concealed by a sort of haughty, arbitrary indifference of manner arising from his early training; and by a something an enemy might have called foppish, in his aspect—like a distorted echo of past elegancies. He managed to keep an almost military discipline amongst the coolies of the estate he had dragged into the light of day out of the tangle and shadows of the jungle; and the white shirt he put on every evening with its stiff glossy front and high

collar looked as if he had meant to preserve the decent ceremony of evening-dress, but had wound a thick crimson sash above his hips as a concession to the wilderness, once his adversary, now his vanquished companion. Moreover, it was a hygienic precaution. Worn wide open in front, a short jacket of some airy silken stuff floated from his shoulders. His fluffy, fair hair, thin at the top, curled slightly at the sides; a carefully arranged moustache, an ungarnished forehead, the gleam of low patent shoes peeping under the wide bottom of trousers out straight from the same stuff as the gossamer coat, completed a figure recalling, with its sash, a pirate chief of romance, and at the same time the elegance of a slightly bald dandy indulging, in seclusion, a taste for unorthodox costume.

It was his evening get-up. The proper time for the *Sofala* to arrive at Batu Beru was an hour before sunset, and he looked picturesque, and somehow quite correct too, walking at the water's edge on the background of grass slope crowned with a low long bungalow with an immensely steep roof of palm thatch, and clad to the eaves in flowering creepers. While the *Sofala* was being made fast he strolled in the shade of the few trees left near the landing-place, waiting till he could go on board. Her white men were not of his kind. The old Sultan (though his wistful invasions were a nuis-

ance) was really much more acceptable to his fastidious taste. But still they were white; the periodical visits of the ship made a break in the well-filled sameness of the days without disturbing his privacy. Moreover, they were necessary from a business point of view; and through a strain of preciseness in his nature he was irritated when she failed to appear at the appointed time.

The cause of the irregularity was too absurd, and Massy, in his opinion, was a contemptible idiot. The first time the *Sofala* reappeared under the new agreement swinging out of the bend below, after he had almost given up all hope of ever seeing her again, he felt so angry that he did not go down at once to the landing-place. His servants had come running to him with the news, and he had dragged a chair close against the front rail of the verandah, spread his elbows out, rested his chin on his hands, and went on glaring at her fixedly while she was being made fast opposite his house. He could make out easily all the white faces on board. Who on earth was that kind of patriarch they had got there on the bridge now?

At last he sprang up and walked down the gravel path. It was a fact that the very gravel for his paths had been imported by the *Sofala*. Exasperated out of his quiet superciliousness, without looking at any one right or left, he accosted Massy straightway in so determined a manner that the engineer, taken aback, began to stammer unintelligibly.

Nothing could be heard but the words: "Mr Van Wyk . . . Indeed, Mr Van Wyk . . . For the future, Mr Van Wyk"—and by the suffusion of blood Massy's vast bilious face acquired an unnatural orange tint, out of which the disconcerted coal-black eyes shone in an extraordinary manner.

"Nonsense. I am tired of this. I wonder you have the impudence to come alongside my jetty as if I had it made for your convenience alone."

Massy tried to protest earnestly. Mr Van Wyk was very angry. He had a good mind to ask that German firm—those people in Malacca—what was their name?—boats with green funnels. They would be only too glad of the opening to put one of their small steamers on the run. Yes; Schnitzler, Jacob Schnitzler, would in a moment. Yes. He had decided to write without delay.

In his agitation Massy caught up his falling pipe.

"You don't mean it, sir!" he shrieked.

"You shouldn't mismanage your business in this ridiculous manner."

Mr Van Wyk turned on his heel. The other three whites on the bridge had not stirred during the scene. Massy walked hastily from side to side, puffed out his cheeks, suffocated.

"Stuck up Dutchman."

And he moaned out feverishly a long tale of griefs. The efforts he had made for all these years to please that man. This was the return you got

for it, eh? Pretty. Write to Schnitzler—let in the green-funnel boats—get an old Hamburg Jew to ruin him. No, really he could laugh. . . . He laughed sobbingly. . . . Ha! ha! ha! And make him carry the letter in his own ship presumably.

He stumbled across a grating and swore. He would not hesitate to fling the Dutchman's correspondence overboard—the whole confounded bundle. He had never, never made any charge for that accommodation. But Captain Whalley, his new partner, would not let him probably; besides, it would be only putting off the evil day. For his own part he would make a hole in the water rather than look on tamely at the green funnels overrunning his trade.

He raved aloud. The China boys hung back with the dishes at the foot of the ladder. He yelled from the bridge down at the deck, "Aren't we going to have any chow this evening at all?" then turned violently to Captain Whalley, who waited, grave and patient, at the head of the table, smoothing his beard in silence now and then with a forbearing gesture.

"You don't seem to care what happens to me. Don't you see that this affects your interests as much as mine? It's no joking matter."

He took the foot of the table growling between his teeth.

"Unless you have a few thousands put away somewhere. I haven't."

Mr Van Wyk dined in his

thoroughly lit-up bungalow, putting a point of splendour in the night of his clearing above the dark bank of the river. Afterwards he sat down to his piano, and in a pause he became aware of slow footsteps passing on the path along the front. A plank or two creaked under a heavy tread; he swung half round on the music-stool, listening with his finger-tips at rest on the keyboard. His little terrier barked violently, backing in from the verandah. A deep voice apologised gravely for "this intrusion." He walked out quickly.

At the head of the steps the patriarchal figure, who was the new captain of the *Sofala* apparently (he had seen a round dozen of them, but not one of that sort), towered without advancing. The little dog barked unceasingly, till a flick of Mr Van Wyk's handkerchief made him spring aside into silence. Captain Whalley, opening the matter, was met by a punctiliously polite but determined opposition.

They carried on their discussion standing where they had come face to face. Mr Van Wyk observed his visitor with attention. Then at last, as if forced out of his reserve—

"I am surprised that you should intercede for such a confounded fool."

This outbreak was almost complimentary, as if its meaning had been, "That such a man as you should intercede!" Captain Whalley let it pass by without flinching. One would have thought he had heard nothing. He simply

went on to state that he was personally interested in putting things straight between them. Personally . . .

But Mr Van Wyk, really carried away by his disgust with Massy, became very incisive—

"Indeed—if I am to be frank with you—his whole character does not seem to me particularly estimable or trustworthy . . ."

Captain Whalley, always straight, seemed to grow an inch taller and broader, as if the girth of his chest had suddenly expanded under his beard.

"My dear sir, you don't think I came here to discuss a man with whom I am—I am—h'm—closely associated."

A sort of solemn silence lasted for a moment. He was not used to asking favours, but the importance he attached to this affair had made him willing to try. . . . Mr Van Wyk, favourably impressed, and suddenly mollified by a desire to laugh, interrupted—

"That's all right if you make it a personal matter; but you can do no less than sit down and smoke a cigar with me."

A slight pause, then Captain Whalley stepped forward heavily. As to the regularity of the service, for the future he made himself responsible for it; and his name was Whalley—perhaps to a sailor (he was speaking to a sailor, was he not?) not altogether unfamiliar. There was a lighthouse now, on an island. Maybe Mr Van Wyk himself . . .

"Oh yes. Oh indeed." Mr

Van Wyk caught on at once. He indicated a chair. How very interesting. For his own part he had seen some service in the last Acheen War, but had never been so far East. Whalley Island? Of course. Now that was very interesting. What changes his guest must have seen since.

"I can look further back even—on a whole half-century."

Captain Whalley expanded a bit. The flavour of a good cigar (it was a weakness) had gone straight to his heart, also the civility of that young man. There was something in that accidental contact of which he had been starved in his years of struggle.

The front wall retreating made a square recess furnished like a room. A lamp with a milky glass shade, suspended below the slope of the high roof at the end of a slender brass chain, threw a bright round of light upon a little table bearing an open book and an ivory paper-knife. And, in the translucent shadows beyond, other tables could be seen, a number of easy-chairs of various shapes, with a great profusion of skin rugs strewn on the teak-wood planking all over the verandah. The flowering creepers scented the air. Their foliage clipped out between the uprights made as if several frames of thick unstirring leaves reflecting the lamplight in a green glow. Through the opening at his elbow Captain Whalley could see the gangway lantern of the *Sofala* burning dim by the shore, the shadowy masses

of the town beyond the open lustrous darkness of the river, and, as if hung along the straight edge of the projecting eaves, a narrow black strip of the night sky full of stars—resplendent. The famous cigar in hand he had a moment of complacency.

"A trifle. Somebody must lead the way. I just showed that the thing could be done; but you men brought up to the use of steam cannot conceive the vast importance of my bit of venturesomeness to the Eastern trade of the time. Why, that new route reduced the average time of a southern passage by eleven days for more than half the year. Eleven days! It's on record. But the remarkable thing—speaking to a sailor—I should say was . . ."

He talked well, without egotism, professionally. The powerful voice, produced without effort, filled the bungalow even into the empty rooms with a deep and limpid resonance, seemed to make a stillness outside; and Mr Van Wyk was surprised by the serene quality of its tone, like the perfection of manly gentleness. Nursing one small foot, in a silk sock and a patent leather shoe, on his knee, he was immensely entertained. It was as if nobody could talk like this now, and the overshadowed eyes, the flowing white beard, the big frame, the serenity, the whole temper of the man, were an amazing survival from the prehistoric times of the world coming up to him out of the sea.

Captain Whalley had been

also the pioneer of the early trade in the Gulf of Pe-tchi-li. He even found occasion to mention that he had buried his "dear wife" there six-and-twenty years ago. Mr Van Wyk, impassive, could not help speculating in his mind swiftly as to the sort of woman that would mate with such a man. Did they make an adventurous and well-matched pair? No. Very possibly she had been small, frail, no doubt very feminine—or most likely commonplace with domestic instincts, utterly insignificant. But Captain Whalley was no garrulous bore, and shaking his head as if to dissipate the momentary gloom that had settled on his handsome old face, he alluded conversationally to Mr Van Wyk's solitude.

Mr Van Wyk affirmed that sometimes he had more company than he wanted. He mentioned smilingly some of the peculiarities of his intercourse with "My Sultan." He made his visits in force. Those people damaged his grass plot in front (it was not easy to obtain some approach to a lawn in the tropics), and the other day had broken down some rare bushes he had planted over there. And Captain Whalley remembered immediately that, in 'forty-seven, the then Sultan, "this man's grandfather," had been notorious as a great protector of the piratical fleets of praus from farther East. They had a safe refuge in the river at Batu Beru. He financed more especially a Balinini chief called Haji Daman. Captain Whalley, nodding significantly his bushy

white eyebrows, had very good reason to know something of that. The world had progressed since that time.

Mr Van Wyk demurred with unexpected acrimony. Progressed in what? he wanted to know.

Why, in knowledge of truth, in decency, in justice, in order—in honesty too, since men harmed each other mostly from ignorance. It was, Captain Whalley concluded quaintly, more pleasant to live in.

Mr Van Wyk whimsically would not admit that Mr Massy, for instance, was more pleasant naturally than the Balinini pirates.

The river had not gained much by the change. They were in their way every bit as honest. Massy was less ferocious than Haji Daman no doubt, but . . .

"And what about you, my good sir?" Captain Whalley laughed a deep soft laugh. "You are an improvement, surely."

He continued in a vein of pleasantry. A good cigar was better than a knock on the head—the sort of welcome he would have found on this river forty or fifty years ago. Then leaning forward slightly, he became earnestly serious. It seems as if, outside their own sea-gipsy tribes, these rovers had hated all mankind with an incomprehensible, bloodthirsty hatred. Meantime their depredations had been stopped, and what was the consequence? The new generation was orderly, peaceable, settled in prosperous

villages. He could speak from personal knowledge. And even the few survivors of that time—old men now—had changed so much, that it would have been unkind to remember against them that they had ever slit a throat in their lives. He had one especially in his mind's eye: a dignified, venerable headman of a certain large coast village about sixty miles sou'west of Tampasuk. It did one's heart good to see him—to hear that man speak. He might have been a ferocious savage once. What men wanted was to be checked by superior intelligence, by superior knowledge, by superior force too—yes, by force held in trust from God and sanctified by its use in accordance with His declared will. Captain Whalley believed a disposition for good existed in every man, even if the world were not a very happy place as a whole. In the wisdom of men he had not so much confidence. The disposition had to be helped up pretty sharply sometimes, he admitted. They might be silly, wrongheaded, unhappy; but naturally evil—no. There was at bottom a complete harmlessness at least . . .

"Is there?" Mr Van Wyk snapped acrimoniously.

Captain Whalley laughed at the interjection, in the good humour of large, tolerating certitude. He could look back at half a century, he pointed out. The smoke oozed placidly through the white hairs hiding his kindly lips.

"At all events," he resumed

after a pause, "I am glad that they've had no time to do you much harm as yet."

This allusion to his comparative youthfulness did not offend Mr Van Wyk, who got up and wriggled his shoulders with an enigmatic half-smile. They walked out together amicably into the starry night towards the river-side. Their footsteps resounded unequally on the dark path. At the shore end of the gangway the lantern, hung low to the handrail, threw a vivid light on the white legs and the big black feet of Mr Massy waiting about anxiously. From the waist upwards he remained shadowy, with a row of buttons gleaming up to the vague outline of his chin.

"You may thank Captain Whalley for this," Mr Van Wyk said curtly to him before turning away.

The lamps on the verandah flung three long squares of light between the uprights far over the grass. A bat flitted before his face like a circling flake of velvety blackness. Along the jasmine hedge the night air seemed heavy with the fall of perfumed dew; flower-beds bordered the path; the clipped bushes uprose in dark rounded clumps here and there before the house; the dense foliage of creepers filtered the sheen of the lamplight within in a soft glow all along the front; and everything near and far stood still in a great immobility, in a great sweetness.

Mr Van Wyk (a few years before he had had occasion to imagine himself treated more badly than anybody alive had ever

been by a woman) felt for Captain Whalley's optimistic views the disdain of a man who had once been credulous himself. His disgust with the world (the woman for a time had filled it for him completely) had taken the form of activity in retirement, because, though capable of great depth of feeling, he was energetic and essentially practical. But there was in that uncommon old sailor, drifting on the outskirts of his busy solitude, something that fascinated his scepticism. His very simplicity (amusing enough) was like a delicate refinement of an upright character. The striking dignity of manner could be nothing else, in a man reduced to such a humble position, but the expression of something essentially noble in the character. With all his trust in mankind he was no fool; the serenity of his temper at the end of so many years, since it could not obviously have been appeased by success, wore an air of profound wisdom. Mr Van Wyk was amused at it sometimes. Even the very physical traits of the old captain of the *Sofala*, his powerful frame, his reposeful mien, his intelligent, handsome face, the big limbs, the benign courtesy, the touch of rugged severity in the shaggy eyebrows, made up a seductive personality. Mr Van Wyk disliked littleness of every kind, but there was nothing small about that man, and in the exemplary regularity of many trips an intimacy had grown up between them, a warm feeling at bottom under a kindly

stateliness of forms agreeable to his fastidiousness.

They kept their respective opinions on all worldly matters. His other convictions Captain Whalley never intruded. The difference of their ages was like another bond between them. Once, when twitted with the uncharitableness of his youth, Mr Van Wyk, running his eye over the vast proportions of his interlocutor, retorted in friendly banter—

"Oh. You'll come to my way of thinking yet. You'll have plenty of time. Don't call yourself old: you look good for a round hundred."

But he could not help his stinging incisiveness, and though moderating it by an almost affectionate smile, he added—

"And by then you will probably consent to die from sheer disgust."

Captain Whalley, smiling too, shook his head. "God forbid!"

He thought that perhaps on the whole he deserved something better than to die in such sentiments. The time of course would have to come, and he trusted to his Maker to provide a manner of going out of which he need not be ashamed. For the rest he hoped he would live to a hundred if need be: other men had been known; it would be no miracle. He expected no miracles.

The pronounced, argumentative tone caused Mr Van Wyk to raise his head and look at him steadily. Captain Whalley was gazing fixedly with a rapt

expression, as though he had seen his Creator's favourable decree written in mysterious characters on the wall. He kept perfectly motionless for a few seconds, then got his vast bulk on to his feet so impetuously that Mr Van Wyk was startled.

He struck first a heavy blow on his inflated chest: and, throwing out horizontally a big arm that remained steady, extended in the air like the limb of a tree on a windless day—

"Not a pain or ache there. Can you see this shake in the least?"

His voice was low, in an awing, confident contrast with the headlong emphasis of his movements. He sat down abruptly.

"This isn't to boast of it, you know. I am nothing," he said in his effortless strong voice, that seemed to come out as naturally as a river flows. He picked up the stump of the cigar he had laid aside, and added peacefully, with a slight nod, "As it happens, my life is necessary; it isn't my own, it isn't—God knows."

He did not say much for the rest of the evening, but several times Mr Van Wyk detected a faint smile of assurance flitting under the heavy moustache.

Later on Captain Whalley would now and then consent to dine "at the house." He could even be induced to drink a glass of wine. "Don't think I am afraid of it, my good sir," he explained. "There was a very good reason why I should give it up."

On another occasion, leaning back at ease, he remarked, "You have treated me most—most humanely, my dear Mr Van Wyk, from the very first."

"You'll admit there was some merit," Mr Van Wyk hinted slyly. "An associate of that excellent Massy. . . . Well, well, my dear captain, I won't say a word against him."

"It would be no use your saying anything against him," Captain Whalley affirmed a little moodily. "As I've told you before, my life—my work, is necessary, not for myself alone. I can't choose" . . . He paused, turned the glass before him right round. . . . "I have an only child—a daughter."

The ample downward sweep of his arm over the table seemed to suggest a small girl at a vast

distance. "I hope to see her once more before I die. Meantime it's enough to know that she has me sound and solid, thank God. You can't understand how one feels. Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh; the very image of my poor wife. Well, she . . ."

Again he paused, then pronounced stoically the words, "She has a hard struggle."

And his head fell on his breast, his eyebrows remained knitted, as by an effort of meditation. But generally his mind seemed steeped in the serenity of boundless trust in a higher power. Mr Van Wyk wondered sometimes how much of it was due to the splendid vitality of the man, to the bodily vigour which seems to impart something of its force to the soul. But he had learned to like him very much.

XIII.

This was the reason why Mr Sterne's confidential communication, delivered hurriedly on the shore alongside the dark silent ship, had disturbed his equanimity. It was the most incomprehensible and unexpected thing that could happen; and the perturbation of his spirit was so great that, forgetting all about his letters, he ran rapidly up the bridge ladder.

The portable table was being put together for dinner to the left of the wheel by two pig-tailed "boys," who as usual snarled at each other over the job, while another, a doleful, burly, very yellow Chinaman, resembling Mr Massy, waited

apathetically with the cloth over his arm and a pile of thick dinner-plates against his chest. A common cabin lamp with its globe missing, brought up from below, had been hooked to the wooden framework of the awning; the side-screens had been lowered all round; Captain Whalley filling the depths of the wicker-chair seemed to sit benumbed in a canvas tent crudely lighted, and used for the storing of nautical objects; a shabby steering-wheel, a battered brass binnacle on a stout mahogany stand, two dingy life-buoys, an old cork fender lying in a corner, dilapidated deck-lockers

with loops of thin rope instead of door-handles.

He shook off the appearance of numbness to return Mr Van Wyk's unusually brisk greeting, but relapsed directly afterwards. To accept a pressing invitation to dinner "up at the house" was another very visible physical effort. Mr Van Wyk, perplexed, folded his arms, and leaning back against the rail, with his little, black, shiny feet well out, examined him covertly.

"I've noticed of late that you are not quite yourself, old friend."

He put an affectionate gentleness into the last two words. The real intimacy of their intercourse had never been so vividly expressed before.

"Tut, tut, tut!"

The wicker-chair creaked heavily.

"Irritable," commented Mr Van Wyk to himself; and aloud, "I'll expect to see you in half an hour, then," he said negligently, moving off.

"In half an hour," Captain Whalley's rigid silvery head repeated behind him as if out of a trance.

Amidships, below, two voices, close against the engine-room, could be heard answering each other—one angry and slow, the other alert.

"I tell you the beast has locked himself in to get drunk."

"Can't help it now, Mr Massy. After all, a man has a right to shut himself up in his cabin in his own time."

"Not to get drunk."

"I heard him swear that the worry with the boilers was

enough to drive any man to drink," Sterne said maliciously.

Massy hissed out something about bursting the door in. Mr Van Wyk, to avoid them, crossed in the dark to the other side of the deserted deck. The planking of the little wharf rattled faintly under his hasty feet.

"Mr Van Wyk! Mr Van Wyk!"

He walked on: somebody was running on the path. "You've forgotten to get your mail."

Sterne, holding a bundle of papers in his hand, caught up with him.

"Oh, thanks."

But, as the other continued at his elbow, Mr Van Wyk stopped short. The overhanging eaves, descending low upon the lights in the front of the building, threw their black straight-edged shadow into the great body of the night on that side. Everything was very still. A tinkle of cutlery and a slight jingle of glasses were heard. Mr Van Wyk's servants were laying the table for two on the verandah.

"I am afraid you give me no credit whatever for my good intentions in the matter I've spoken to you about," said Sterne.

"I simply don't understand you."

"Captain Whalley is a very audacious man, but he will understand that his game is up. That's all that anybody need ever know of it from me. Believe me, I am very considerate in this, but duty is duty. I don't want to make a fuss.

All I ask you, as his friend, is to tell him from me that the game's up. That will be sufficient."

Mr Van Wyk felt a loathsome dismay at this queer privilege of friendship. He would not demean himself by asking for the slightest explanation; to drive the other away with contumely he did not think prudent—as yet, at any rate. So much assurance staggered him. Who could tell what there could be in it, he thought? His regard for Captain Whalley had the tenacity of a disinterested sentiment, and his practical instinct coming to his aid, he concealed his scorn.

"I gather, then, that this is something grave."

"Very grave," Sterne assented solemnly, delighted at having produced an effect at last. He was ready to add some effusive protestations of regret at the "unavoidable necessity," but Mr Van Wyk cut him short—very civilly, however.

Once on the verandah Mr Van Wyk put his hands in his pockets, and, straddling his legs, stared down at a black panther skin lying on the floor before a rocking-chair. "It looks as if the fellow had not the pluck to play his own precious game openly," he thought.

This was true enough. In the face of Massy's last rebuff Sterne dared not declare his knowledge. His object was simply to get charge of the steamer and keep it for some time. Massy would never for-

give him for forcing himself on; but if Captain Whalley left the ship of his own accord, the command would devolve upon him for the rest of the trip; so he hit upon the brilliant idea of scaring the old man away. A vague menace, a mere hint, would be enough in such a brazen case; and, with a strange admixture of compassion, he thought that Batu Beru was a very good place for throwing up the sponge. The skipper could go ashore quietly, and stay with that Dutchman of his. Weren't these two as thick as thieves together? And on reflection he seemed to see that there was a way to work the whole thing through that great friend of the old man's. This was another brilliant idea. He had an inborn preference for circuitous methods. In this particular case he desired to remain in the background as much as possible, to avoid exasperating Massy needlessly. No fuss! Let it all happen naturally.

Mr Van Wyk all through the dinner was conscious of a sense of isolation that invades sometimes the closeness of human intercourse. Captain Whalley failed lamentably and obviously in his attempts to eat something. He seemed overcome by a strange absent-mindedness. His hand would hover irresolutely, as if left without guidance by a preoccupied mind. Mr Van Wyk had heard him coming up from a long way off in the profound stillness of the river-side, and had noticed the irresolute character of the footfalls. The toe of his boot had struck the

bottom stair as though he had come along mooning with his head in the air right up to the steps of the verandah. Had the captain of the *Sofala* been another sort of man he would have suspected the work of age there. But one glance at him was enough. Time—after, indeed, marking him for its own—had given him up to his usefulness, in which his simple faith would see a proof of Divine mercy. "How could I contrive to warn him?" Mr Van Wyk wondered, as if Captain Whalley had been miles and miles away, out of sight and earshot of all evil. He was sickened by an immense disgust of Sterne. To even mention his threat to a man like Whalley would be positively indecent. There was something more vile and insulting in its hint than in a definite charge of crime—the debasing taint of blackmailing. "What could any one bring against him?" he asked himself. This was a limpid personality. And what for? The Power he trusted had thought fit to leave him nothing on earth that envy could lay hold of, except a bare crust of bread.

"Won't you try some of this?" he asked, pushing a dish slightly. Suddenly it seemed to Mr Van Wyk that Sterne might possibly be coveting the command of the *Sofala*. His cynicism was quite startled by what looked like a proof that no man may count himself safe from his kind unless in the very abyss of misery. An intrigue of that sort was hardly worth troubling about, he judged; but still, with such a fool as Massy to deal

with, he ought to and must be warned.

At this moment Captain Whalley, bolt upright, the deep cavities of the eyes overhung by a bushy frown, and one large brown hand resting on each side of his empty plate, spoke across the table-cloth abruptly—

"Mr Van Wyk, you've always treated me with the most humane consideration."

"My dear captain, you make too much of a simple fact that I am not a savage." Mr Van Wyk, utterly revolted by the thought of Sterne's obscure attempt, raised his voice incisively, as if the mate had been hiding somewhere within earshot. "Any consideration I have been able to show was no more than the rightful due of a character I've learned to regard by this time with an esteem that nothing can shake."

A slight ring of glass made him lift his eyes from the slice of pineapple he was cutting into small pieces on his plate. In changing his position Captain Whalley had contrived to upset an empty tumbler.

Without looking that way, leaning sideways on his elbow, his other hand shading his brow, he groped shakily for it, then desisted. Van Wyk stared blankly, as if something momentous had happened all at once. He did not know why he should feel so startled; but he forgot Sterne utterly for the moment.

"Why, what's the matter?"

And Captain Whalley, half-averted, in a deadened, agitated voice, muttered—

"Esteem!"

"And I may add something more," Mr Van Wyk, very steady-eyed, pronounced slowly.

"Hold, enough!" Captain Whalley did not change his attitude or raise his voice. "Because I can make you no return. I am too poor even for that now. Your esteem is worth having. You are not a man that would stoop to deceive the poorest sort of devil on earth, or make a ship unseaworthy every time he takes her to sea."

Mr Van Wyk, leaning forward, his face gone pink all over, with the starched table-napkin over his knees, was inclined to mistrust his senses, his power of comprehension, the sanity of his guest.

"Where? Why? In the name of God!—what's this? What ship? I don't understand who . . ."

"Then, in the name of God, it is I. A ship's unseaworthy when her captain can't see. I am going blind."

Mr Van Wyk made a slight movement, and sat very still afterwards for a few seconds; then, with the thought of Sterne's "The game's up," he ducked suddenly to pick up the napkin which had slipped off his knees. This was the game that was up. And at the same time the muffled voice of Captain Whalley passed over him—

"I've deceived them all. Nobody knows."

He emerged flushed to the eyes. Captain Whalley, motionless under the full blaze of the lamp, shaded his face with his hand.

"And you had that courage?"

"Call it by what name you

like. But you are a humane man—a—a—gentleman, Mr Van Wyk. You may have asked me what I had done with my conscience."

He seemed to muse, profoundly silent, very still in his mournful pose.

"I began to tamper with it in my pride. You begin to see a lot of things when you are going blind. I could not be frank with an old chum even. I was not frank with Massy—no, not altogether. I knew he took me for a wealthy sailor fool, and I let him. I wanted to keep up my importance—because there was poor Ivy away there—my daughter. What did I want to trade on his misery for? I did trade on it—for her. And now, what mercy could I expect from him? He would trade on mine if he knew it. He would hunt the old fraud out, and stick to the money for a year. Ivy's money. And in a year there will be no sun in the sky for her father."

His deep voice came out, awfully veiled, as though he had been overwhelmed by the earth of a land-slide, and talking to you of the thoughts that haunt the dead in their graves. A cold shudder ran down Mr Van Wyk's back.

"And how long is it since you have . . .?" he began.

"It was a long time before I could bring myself to believe in this—this—visitation," Captain Whalley spoke with gloomy patience from under his hand.

He had not thought he had deserved it. He had begun by deceiving himself from day to day, from week to week. He

had the Serang at hand there—an old servant. It came on gradually, and when he could no longer deceive himself . . .

His voice died out almost.

"Rather than give her up I set myself to deceive you all."

"It's incredible," whispered Mr Van Wyk. Captain Whalley's appalling murmur flowed on.

"Not even the sign of God's anger could make me forget her. How could I forsake my child, feeling my vigour all the time—the blood warm within me? Warm as yours. It seems to me that, like the blinded Samson, I would find the strength to shake down a temple upon my head. She's a struggling woman—my own child that we used to pray over together, my poor wife and I. Do you remember that day I as well as told you that I believed God would let me live to a hundred for her sake? What sin is there in loving your child? Do you see it? I was ready for her sake to live for ever. I half believed I would. I've been praying for death since. Ha! Presumptuous man—you wanted to live."

A tremendous, shuddering upheaval of that big frame, shaken by the passage of a gasping sob, set the glasses jingling all over the table, seemed to make the whole house tremble to the roof-tree. And Mr Van Wyk, whose feeling of outraged love had been translated into a form of struggle with nature, understood very well that, for that man whose whole life had been conditioned by action, there

could exist no other expression for all the emotions; that, to voluntarily cease venturing, doing, enduring, for his child's sake, would have been exactly like plucking his warm love for her out of his living heart. Something too monstrous, too impossible, even to conceive.

Captain Whalley had not changed his attitude, that seemed to have something of shame, sorrow, and defiance.

"I have even deceived you. If it had not been for that word 'esteem.' These are not the words for me. I would have lied to you. Haven't I? Weren't you going to trust your property on board this very trip?"

"I have a floating yearly policy," Mr Van Wyk said almost unwittingly, and was amazed at the sudden cropping up of a commercial detail.

"The ship is unseaworthy, I tell you. It would be invalid if it were known . . ."

"We shall share the guilt, then."

"Nothing could make mine less," said Captain Whalley.

He had not dared to consult a doctor; the man would have perhaps asked who he was, what he was doing; Massy might have heard something. He had lived on without any help, human or divine. The very prayers stuck in his throat. What was there to pray for? and death seemed as far as ever. Once he got into his cabin he dared not come out again; when he sat down he dared not get up; he dared not raise his eyes to anybody's face; he felt re-

luctant to look upon the sea or up to the sky. The world was fading before his great fear of giving himself away. The old ship was his last friend; he was not afraid of her; he knew every inch of her deck; but at her too he hardly dared to look, for fear of finding he could see less than the day before. A great incertitude enveloped him. The horizon was gone; the sky mingled darkly with the sea. Who was this man standing over yonder? what was this thing lying down there? And a frightful doubt of the reality of what he could see made even the little power that remained to him an added torment, a pitfall always open for his miserable pretence. He was afraid to stumble inexcusably, to say Yes or No to a question. The hand of God was heavy upon him, but it could not tear him away from his child. And, as if in a nightmare of humiliation, every featureless man seemed an enemy.

He let his hand fall heavily on the table. Mr Van Wyk, hands down, chin on breast, with a gleam of white teeth pressing on the lower lip, meditated on Sterne's "The game's up."

"The Serang of course does not know."

"Nobody," said Captain Whalley.

"Ah yes. Nobody. Very well. Can you keep it up to the end of the trip? That is the last under the agreement with Massy."

Captain Whalley got up and stood erect, very stately, with the great white beard lying

like a silver breastplate over the awful secret of his heart. Yes; that was the only hope there was for him of ever seeing her again, of securing the money for her before he crept away somewhere — useless, a burden, a reproach to himself. His voice faltered.

"Think of it! Never see her any more: the only human being besides myself now on earth that can remember my wife. She's just like her mother. Lucky the poor woman is where there are no tears shed over those they loved on earth and that remain to pray not to be led into temptation — because, I suppose, the blessed know the secret of grace in God's dealings with His created children."

He swayed a little, said with austere dignity—

"I don't. I know only the child He has given me."

And he began to walk. Mr Van Wyk, jumping up, saw the full meaning of the rigid head, the hesitating walk, the vaguely extended hand. His heart was beating fast; he moved a chair aside, and instinctively advanced as if to offer his arm. But Captain Whalley passed him by, making for the stairs quite straight.

"He could not see me at all out of his line," Van Wyk thought, with a sort of awe. Then going to the head of the stairs, he asked a little tremulously—

"What is it like — like a mist—like . . ."

Captain Whalley, half-way down, stopped, and turned round undismayed to answer.

"It is as if the light were ebbing out of the world. Have you ever watched the ebbing sea on an open stretch of sands withdrawing farther and farther away from you? It is like this—only there will be no flood to follow. Never. It is as if the sun were growing smaller, the stars going out one by one. There can't be many left that I can see by this. But I haven't had the courage to look of late . . ." He must have been able to make out Mr Van Wyk, because he checked him by an authoritative gesture and a stoical—

"I can get about alone yet."

It was as if he had taken his line, and would accept no help from men, after having been cast out, like a presumptuous Titan, from his heaven. Mr

Van Wyk, arrested, seemed to count the footsteps right out of earshot. He walked between the tables, tapping smartly with his heels, took up a paper-knife, dropped it after a vague glance along the blade; then happening upon the piano, struck a few chords again and again, vigorously, standing up before the keyboard with an attentive poise of the head like a pianotuner; closing it, he pivoted on his heels, brusquely avoided the little terrier sleeping trustfully on crossed forepaws, came upon the stairs next, and, as though he had lost his balance on the top step, ran down headlong out of the house. His servants, beginning to clear the table, heard him mutter to himself (evil words no doubt) down there, and then after a pause go away with a strolling gait in the direction of the wharf.

(To be concluded.)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE DEATH OF ÉMILE ZOLA—A PUPIL OF CLAUDE BERNARD—THE SCIENTIFIC ROMANCE—ZOLA'S LYRICAL TEMPERAMENT—A LEADER OF FORLORN-HOPES—A POLITICAL COMEDY—THE EMPEROR AND THE BOERS—THE CALUMNIES OF THE GERMANS—THE NONCONFORMIST CONSCIENCE—A DISHONEST AGITATION.

MISUNDERSTOOD in his life, Émile Zola was strangely unfortunate in his death. Had he survived the influence of the poisonous fumes, what an admirable chapter he might have added to his next romance! It was, indeed, such a death as his own ingenuity might have devised for a Rougon or a Macquart; and we can imagine with how great a mass of detail he would have described the nature and the effect of the noxious gas. He would have set forth at length the sufferings of the victim; he would have sketched with infinite knowledge the shortcomings of Parisian fireplaces: in brief, he would have presented us with a blue-book upon suffocation, whose accuracy would have been beyond question. And he is dead, and the chapter is unwritten, and no more can be said in consolation than that his death, hapless though it were, was none the less grimly appropriate.

For it was never his pleasure to picture the joyous lives, the tranquil deaths, of simple humanity. Though he called himself a realist, he was always in love with whatever was bizarre or grotesque. Despite his professed devotion to

the truth, he always insisted upon selecting only those truths which appealed to his dark and gruesome fancy; and though he passionately desired to keep himself out of his works, the whole series is but an expression of its author's idiosyncrasy. There is nothing in history more wildly paradoxical than the career of M. Zola. Influenced by the teaching of Claude Bernard, he convinced himself that fiction, like chemistry, was the result not merely of observation but of experiment. He was quite sure that the craft which he followed, after Balzac and Flaubert, was not imaginative but scientific. And as he was from the first a man of conflict, he urged his doctrine with a ferocity which, while it made enemies, forced discussion, and gave him all the privileges of a master. Wherefore he sketched the series of novels, by which he will best be known, after a purely scientific fashion. He told Goncourt that it was his intention to paint "the natural and social history of a family, and to show how temperaments, characters, vices, and virtues are developed by their environment, and differentiated like the parts of a garden, shade here and sun there." To this

plan he adhered for many years with the dogged pertinacity which always distinguished him. As far as he could, he sketched his infamous family through all grades of society, and in all the ups and downs of life. Never once did he lose sight of his scientific theory. Nothing could divert him from the purpose which he set out to achieve, save that upon which he had never counted—his own temperament. He tracked his Rougons and his Macquarts into every corner of Paris and into the remote provinces. In order that he might never make a mistake, he “crammed” industriously the most tiresome subjects. He wrote—or thought he wrote—always with his eye on the object, and he never put a character into a certain environment without “testing” the effect in real life. The result is that his romances smell of the lamp, or rather of fifty lamps. They give you the impression that the facts which they enshrine have been collected by fifty faithful clerks, and that the master has summarised them as he chose. In all this there was a certain originality, together with a persistence which, if misguided, was none the less admirable. But, after all his gigantic efforts, Zola did little else than prove that the scientific novel was an impossibility. Not only does his work fail egregiously where it is most aggressively scientific, but a great part of it is not scientific at all. Science, above all, must be accurate, and Zola is rarely

accurate. We do not mean that any of his facts were wilfully wrong. It may be assumed that he checked his note-books with the utmost care. But even life makes some sort of selection among good and bad, and Zola chose as material for his books only such facts as were ugly. One by one his facts may all have been correct. Yet to put many truths side by side in juxtaposition is most often to lie, and it is this kind of lie that Zola was prone to tell.

And, as we have said, he forgot his own temperament. Zola was of the south, passionate and enthusiastic. He explained his doctrine not with the cold accent of science, but in the ardent phrases of an evangelist. Nor could he ever persuade himself to take an impartial view of the monstrous episodes which he collected. Though he called himself a naturalist, he was at heart an old-fashioned *romantique*; and in practice Dumas and Balzac were more eloquent influences upon him than Claude Bernard. If he held one doctrine more strongly than another, it was a belief in personified qualities. Despite his facts, despite his pretence at “experiment,” he was most deeply interested in vast upheavals, in elemental disturbances. A great subject stirred him like a trumpet. There was a lyricism in his blood which all the plasters of naturalism could not stanch. What are his best works but hymns to virtue or to vice! ‘Nana’ and ‘L’Assommoir’ are comminatory chants against

lust and drunkenness. In 'L'Argent' he sings the song of tinkling gold. In 'L'Œuvre' he celebrates the imperious call of work, even though it be misguided and misunderstood. And in all this lyrical extravagance naturalism is forgotten, the theories of Claude Bernard are hushed, and we get a hint of what Zola might have been had he not chosen to fetter the freest of the arts with a formula. After all, Balzac's descriptions of furniture and costume are not essential. The 'Comédie Humaine' is great despite its inapposite realism. But Zola took the worst in Balzac for the best, and with Claude Bernard's help formulated a theory which he followed loyally enough to spoil his best effects.

Moreover, Zola's love of naturalism led him to another folly, which has also obscured the meaning of his books. By a characteristic method, truth in his eyes came to mean lubricity. Now, no one was ever less inclined to lubricity than the creator of the Rougons and the Macquarts; but his pedantic determination to expose nothing save the truth persuaded him to believe that little was true that was not indecent. It was in accordance with this belief that he was perpetually throwing *pétards* into the midst of a simple situation, and it was this practice which caused him to be misunderstood, especially in England. In fact, his books have constantly been labelled

"curious," and no greater injustice than this could ever have been done to a stern moralist, ruined by a theory.

It is difficult to surmise what will be the future of Zola's reputation. To accept his books as faithful pictures of French life would do a grave injustice to a great country, and since Zola claims to cover the whole field, this injustice cannot be explained away by the supposition that the author was interested solely in what was disgraceful. Nor is the author of 'Nana' likely to survive as the master of a fine style. Hag-ridden by science, he did his best to suppress the exuberance of phrase which no doubt was natural to him. He deliberately chose to write the flat, lucid diction of a scientific inquiry, and though he diversified these flat and lucid passages by the lyricism which we have mentioned, the general impression of one of Zola's novels is the impression of a scientific treatise. Though early in his career he formed a school, his pupils dropped away one by one into other paths, and though he was a force in the literature of France, we do not think that he will be remembered as a man of letters.

But the same pertinacity with which he adhered to a false theory of literature supported him when he clung to a true theory of life. By his obstinate action in the Dreyfus case Émile Zola won for himself a place in the history of France which will, we feel sure, outlast the memory of his novels. That he called

down the hatred of his countrymen upon his head mattered not a jot to one who had been more violently attacked and more widely read than any author of his generation. But it may safely be said that nothing that he ever wrote had half the effect of his famous letter, entitled "J'Accuse." In that memorable document he accused Presidents, Ministers of War, Generals, and Journalists of a conspiracy to torture an innocent man; but so valiantly did he support his accusation that he turned the tide of French politics, and at last saw the triumph of the truth. To gain this end he suffered the loss of his friends, he was publicly disgraced, he was driven into exile. Of course he endured the buffetings of fate with the calm indifference which was his habit, and he spent some weeks in hiding at Norwood, which doubtless compensated his romantico-scientific soul for much discomfort. But he was the only man in France who could thus successfully have faced all the powers of France. He cared nothing for public opinion; he was not to be turned aside from his purpose by any influence of Government or society; he was notoriously clean-handed; and he could neither lose nor gain anything by his intrepid action. So, with his eloquence to aid him, he took the field against the constituted authorities, and before he died he had the satisfaction of seeing the tardy march of truth and justice.

Thus throughout his life

Zola was a leader of forlorn-hopes. The scientific novel was a forlorn-hope; so also seemed the liberation of Dreyfus. But the scientific novel was sold as no novel was ever sold before, and Dreyfus, having left the Devil's Isle, now enjoys the larger air of France. There was, however, one forlorn-hope which he did not lead to success: he knocked, and he knocked in vain, at the doors of the French Academy. In some four years he was rejected fifteen times by that august assembly, and how many times afterwards we cannot count. Why the Academy rejected the aspirant we know not. Even M. Zola's enemies cannot place him lower in the scale than the majority of the forty who rejected him. Nor was there any uncertainty in their rejection. When Zola was lucky, he polled a single vote; but most often he polled none at all. Yet he was not deterred by this lack of sympathy. He made his calls again without any false shame, and no doubt justified his action on the ground that as the Academy is a public institution he had a perfect right to batter at its doors. But the Academy took (and takes) a different view. It regards itself as a private club, which none may enter who does not conform to the opinion of the majority, and so it was at the Quai Malaquai that Zola met his single defeat. Yet the brilliance of his victories outshines his one defeat, and he died triumphant if misunderstood. His theory of art is already rejected; his

books will perhaps be remembered only by the studious, but he will live in French history as a man who sacrificed all for justice, and who by his own exile liberated the wretched victim of a foolish fanaticism.

Happily, in spite of M. Zola, life is not all tragedy, and Europe has been amused during the past month by such a comedy as is not often played on the political stage. The protagonists were the Boer generals and the German Emperor; while England (we are glad to note) assumed the modest rôle of a mute personage. "Shall I or shall I not receive the Boer generals?" Such was the question posed by William II. in his well-known part of the *Man of Many Shifts*. "Receive us in God's name," replied the Boers with the determination of Pantagruel. "Nay, but," quoth the Imperial Panurge, and so the matter dropped.

Probably we shall never know the whole truth, and it matters little whether this portentous secret of State be revealed or not. Had the German Emperor sincerely desired to interview the generals who had bravely defended their country, there might have been no reason why his desire should not have been gratified, provided always that he observed the obligatory conditions. The Boers cannot easily provide themselves with so specious an excuse. Either they have accepted their defeat in a loyal spirit, or they have been false to the oath which they took

in South Africa. If they are content to assume the duties and privileges of British citizenship, it is difficult to understand why they wander up and down Europe asking for alms and imperial recognition. Now, Mr Reitz has chosen the franker method of public perjury. He has openly declared himself forsworn. He considers his word of honour so lightly that he broke it as soon as ever he set foot in Europe. With him, then, we are in no doubt. Should he attempt to return to Africa he will be most properly excluded; and if his violent language pleases the American-Irish it will break no bones, and disturb no policy. The three generals, however, have adopted a more cunning style of address. The platitudes of loyalty are very often on their tongue, especially when they think they see a profit in good faith. But now and again, either because they grow arrogant or because they have kept bad company, they, too, have made a profession of treachery. Nothing could have been worse in spirit or substance than the pitiful manifesto which they signed and sent broadcast over Europe, and the effect was not improved by the simultaneous publication of a loyal, even an obsequious, letter. It seems as though they have brought with them from Africa that policy of cunning, disastrously inaugurated by Mr Kruger. At any rate, while General De Wet boasts of English citizenship, General Botha whines like a mendicant, and revives

the old charges, long since disproved, of England's cruelty and England's disregard of the laws of war.

Thus it was this manifesto which gave an exaggerated value to the Emperor William's invitation. Was he entertaining the Boers as English citizens or as England's foes? They have played both parts so industriously during the last few weeks that the question was not unreasonable. Yet the answer never came, for after a few days, in which the German journals surpassed themselves in ingenious calumny, it was officially announced that the Emperor would not receive the generals, and that the incident was closed. Of course it did not matter in the slightest whether three itinerant lecturers were granted an interview or not. But both Germany and the lecturers have taken the affair very seriously indeed. If we may believe the Emperor's mouthpiece, General Botha and his friends declined to be announced by the British Ambassador. If, on the other hand, General de Wet is telling the truth, no such objection was made. "We would at once have availed ourselves," he says, "of anything like an official invitation, and we would most certainly have applied to the British Ambassador if that had been officially desired." Into this competition of contradictory statements it is not for us to enter. The two parties who have given each other the lie will doubtless patch up their difference. Meanwhile the last act of the

comedy is the most amusing. The Germans, foiled of an opportunity to insult England, are venting their rage upon the hapless Boers, who but a month ago were invincible heroes, and who to-day are accused of gross discourtesy towards the Emperor.

So the Boers have come out of the adventure worsted at every point. They have lost whatever remained to them of popularity in England, and they have met with a far cooler response in Berlin than might have been theirs. Throughout their pilgrimage they have behaved like simple, cunning peasants. They have forgotten that the loose statements which they make in Amsterdam or Brussels are heard and criticised in London; and while they have forfeited the only friends who might have served them, they have clearly alienated the false friends who flattered them, in the vain hope that they might wound the feelings of England. Had not their conduct been wholly mischievous we might find it in our heart to pity them. After all, it is not agreeable to be the plaything of an Emperor who has used Botha, as once he used Kruger, for his own cynical ends. Yet the incident is not without its use. Henceforth we may justly mistrust the Boers though they come with gifts in their hands, and we shall wisely hesitate before we invite the counsel of those who thus stir up strife in unfriendly countries.

But if the Boers have shown bad faith, what shall we say of the Germans? Were it the

mere curiosity of a soldier which prompted the German Emperor to invite the Boers to an audience, the matter might have passed. But this we cannot believe. William II. is no doubt an "impulsive" monarch, but his impulses are rarely without reason, and there can be no doubt that the audience which was not held was arranged with a clear and definite purpose. The mere discussion of it reawoke the slumbering Anglophobia of Germany, and gave an opportunity for a renewal of that flagrant insolence to which by this time we are accustomed. We have no objection to open enmity. If we have foes we shall know how to treat them when the time comes. But the conduct of Germany during the last five years is discreditable to her, as it is tiresome to us. A campaign of the press which is unanimous cannot be other than official, especially in a country which, like Germany, not only controls its newspapers, but supports a press bureau. When we observe that Berlin and Frankfort are in agreement, when we note that editors at opposite ends of Germany express the same ill-feeling in the same words, we have a right to conclude that the ill-feeling is organised, and the words dictated. Yet whenever a protest is raised in England against the conduct of Germany, the Germans, both politicians and journalists, are quick to disavow responsibility. On the one hand they dissociate themselves as bravely as they dare from their Emperor; on

the other they assert that the abuse of the press has no significance. But they forget that their Emperor is an autocrat, and their press subject to the general autocracy. Therefore we can absolve no one in the German Empire from complicity in the unjustifiable attacks directed against England. A few weeks ago a German editor went to prison because he dared in all modesty to disagree with his sovereign. For three years the so-called comic and other journals of Germany have printed daily or weekly insults upon all whom England respects—insults too foul for repetition. Yet no word of protest was ever uttered in Germany, the simplest step was not taken to punish the offenders, and we are still asked to believe that though every individual German may hate us, the German Empire feels towards us nothing but friendship.

This, of course, is nonsense. Friendship is best known by its expression, and the scurrility of the Germans is sufficient proof of their hatred. What this is based upon we need not enquire, but it is as well to remember it when we negotiate with the country over which William II. reigns. His position no doubt is delicate. He has personal relations with England which, were he not an Emperor, might incline him to amiability. But, on the other hand, he believes (erroneously) that Anglophobia will best help his policy of expansion. His ambition is to establish a supremacy upon the sea. And

to achieve this an invincible fleet is necessary. But there is a strong party in the State which does not see the necessity of ironclads, and the Emperor would find it difficult to carry out his programme unless he had a red rag to wave before his subjects. That red rag is England, and the Emperor would, if he could, use us for his purpose as impertinently as he uses the Boers. In all this there may be no danger; but we may be forgiven if we resent impertinence, even though it be intended not to annoy us, but merely to further a policy of naval aggrandisement.

The Germans themselves have given many interesting explanations of their hysterical ebullition. With a complete lack of humour they have publicly protested that they are a sensitive folk, and that they have been grievously hurt by England's lack of sympathy. This of course is the last word of farce. Nothing that has been said on our side the Channel can for an instant be compared to the indecent impertinences of the German "comic" press, or the Chancellor's infamous denunciation of the British Army. Nor indeed is there any reason to make a comparison. We were never the aggressors; and if we have protested, it has only been after unendurable provocation. But the Germans, finding no deeper grievance than the serious articles of a serious weekly, forthwith declare that they have a long memory, and that they are still attempting to pay

England out for the part she played in the Schleswig-Holstein affair. This is perhaps the most fantastic fairy story of all: the Schleswig-Holstein affair was settled more than a generation ago in accordance with Germany's wishes, and whatever opinion was expressed by England has long ago been forgotten. In truth, we can only believe that Germany's hatred of England is general and deep-seated, and that it has been engineered for a very special purpose.

Nevertheless, the Emperor seems to believe that he can retain the love of England by a telegram addressed to Oxford undergraduates, or by a visit hastily paid to these shores. Yet the offence cannot so easily be wiped out. What would his countrymen think, for instance, if we emulated their interest in conquered races? Suppose we invited the most refractory of the Poles to make a tour in England? Suppose we greeted them with acclamation, and listened with patience to their criticism of the German rule? Would the people of Germany then believe in our friendship, because our King passed a month at Homburg or visited in a friendly spirit the capital of a friendly Power? We think not; and we shall judge the Germans by the same standard whereby we expect to be judged. So long as they hurl a daily insult at us, so long as they receive with exaggerated honour those whom they believe our enemies, so long shall we regard their words with suspicion and their

actions with distrust. We hear much of Germany's desire to be our friend. We will credit the sincerity of this desire when Germany contrives to mind her own business, and to leave us to conduct our Empire (as we surely shall conduct it) in our own way.

The German Emperor and the Boers have not shown themselves eager partisans of the truth. But compared with Dr Clifford and his friends they are scrupulosity in human shape. In other words, the Nonconformist Conscience is as flexible as indiarubber. You can pull it any way you like, and you will find it always stretches away from truth or honesty. For some years it has been happily slumbering, but aroused during the last few months from slumber, it is ready for any enterprise. Now, the Nonconformist ought before all things to be honourable and single-minded. His whole existence is a protest against the shortcomings of others. He is ready to die, so he has told you any time the last three hundred years, for freedom of opinion, and we should be the last to complain of his magnanimity. But the worst of him is that agitation lulls him to a forgetfulness of all his cherished principles. No sooner does he stomp the country than he puts freedom of opinion out of his mind, especially the freedom of opinion which is claimed by others. He bullies and he hectors in the sacred name of Conscience, and he is so deeply

intent upon worsting his opponents that he misrepresents facts and confuses theories. His method of procedure has long been familiar, but never has he revealed himself with so little reserve as in the controversy which has been waged about the Education Bill. The sitting of Parliament seems to awe him. But during the recess he is as valiant as Ancient Pistol himself. He has made up his mind, so he said, to reject the bill in the House of Commons; and, if that failed him, to attack the House of Lords; and, if the Lords were obdurate, to appeal to the King. This of course is mere hysteria, and in six months we shall find him and his fellows accepting the Education Act with a sort of injured complacency.

The hysteria of the Nonconformists is not interesting. What is far more curious is their love of untruth. Mr Balfour did not exaggerate one jot when he declared at Manchester that "never in a prolonged political experience had he known the art of misrepresentation carried to such cynical lengths." Where Religion is concerned, the Nonconformists believe that any method of warfare is permissible. They have attacked the Government Bill up and down England on the ground that it increases the power of the parson. They have declared that it is subtly devised to place the schools of England under the heel of the clergy. These charges have been brought against the Bill in meetings packed with ignorant persons who believe that

the white tie of nonconformity is a pledge of truth. Yet it is entirely the fault of Dr Clifford and his colleagues that these ignorant persons do not know that one object of the Bill is to reduce the power of the parson. At present the clergyman of a parish holds in his hand the management of the parish school. When the Bill now before Parliament is passed, he will share the management with five others. At every point you may note the same misrepresentation. One pious agitator is convinced that the people is to be deprived of its school. Another, yet bolder, proclaims that henceforth denominational teaching will be inflicted by law. Indeed, the Nonconformists are so very conscientious that, in Mr Balfour's phrase, they believe themselves "bound to put their household furniture up to auction as a protest against the Education Bill." This attitude is of course mere lawlessness. If conscience is to compel us to protest against any law we find obnoxious, there is an end of national life and good government. But the Nonconformists are not only lawless, they are manifestly insincere. They know perfectly well that the Bill does not increase the influence of the clergy. They can easily discover, if they choose, that the Bill does not enforce denominational teaching. But agitation is in their blood, and they make upon the platform precisely those misrepresentations which they believe are effective.

It is not pleasant to contem-

plate this dishonesty in a party which claims for itself a higher standard of morality than that with which better men are satisfied to conform. But the Nonconformists gladly subordinate truth to party, and we shall not understand the recent agitation until we recognise that it has nothing to do either with education or religion. In fact, the opponents of the Bill are the same men who were yesterday the opponents of the Boer war. They have changed the excuse of their falsehood—that is all. Their ignorance of South Africa was as clearly evident as is their ignorance of the Bill now before Parliament, and they thought it no sin to believe the malicious gossip of the first comer. When an hysterical woman, to whom observation was a plain impossibility, told them stories of the Concentration Camps, they lashed themselves on platforms into a histrionic rage, and listened with enthusiasm to the popular applause. Here was an excellent opportunity at once to glorify themselves and to insult their country, nor is it without significance that to-day we find the pro-Boers of yesterday most garrulous in attacking a Bill, every one of whose provisions they misrepresent. There is a certain brain which understands neither patriotism nor honour, which is merely constructed for the pursuit of party politics; and though this brain is ultimately ineffectual, for the moment it compels the attention of the

people. But few agitations are successful that have not some right and reason for their support, and an antidote has already been found for the Nonconformist venom. The more widely the Bill is discussed, the more clearly will the falsehood of the other side be evident. We do not pretend that the Bill is perfect; but no Education Bill can be perfect until all men are agreed upon Religion, and there is no dissension concerning the method of instruction. But Parliament must perforce deal with the world as it finds it, nor has a more straightforward attempt ever been made to deal with a difficult question than that which has evoked the malice and enmity of the Nonconformists.

The opposition of Lord Rosebery is even more remarkable than the cunning of his allies. For many years Lord Rosebery has told us that Britain is in peril for lack of education. Yet no sooner does the Government set itself to co-ordinate public education,—to

contrive that the secondary schools should be developed,—than Lord Rosebery declares that the Bill must be fought to the death. What he would put in its place we do not know; and again we must suppose that the party politician has triumphed over the man of sense. But Lord Rosebery has recently declared that if Sir Henry Campbell - Bannerman is of the Liberal party he is not, and therefore his speech is no more than an expression of one man's opinion. Indeed, the henchmen of Dr Clifford are still the most violent and least scrupulous opponents of the measure, and to match their policy of misrepresentation we should have to go far back in our history. But we would not involve all Nonconformists in the charge to which Dr Clifford must plead guilty. Many there are who have supported or opposed the Bill honourably upon its merits. For there are Nonconformists of several kinds, and happily they are not all afflicted with a Nonconformist Conscience.

GERMAN WAR.

BY "LINESMAN."

THE German Emperor has dominion over nearly eight millions of men pledged to fighting for him, of whom half are trained to arms and to absolute obedience to their fifty-two thousand odd officers. Of these, 609,000 men are actually in uniform in fortress and barracks at the present moment, organised as a standing peace army of 625 battalions of infantry, 94 regiments of cavalry, 583 batteries of horse and field artillery with 3498 guns, 38 regiments of foot artillery with 26 different patterns of cannon and howitzers in their charge, and finally 60 battalions of scientific, artificer, and transport troops. It is the annual custom of the Emperor—at what time British soldiers are taking the field against the partridges—to exercise portions of this vast host in war under his personal direction. He would like to exercise it all, but money is not so plentiful as men, and the mightiest captain in Europe must perforce content himself with witnessing the trivial combats of but an eleventh part, or less, of his twenty-three army corps. But he and his men, despite this distressing limitation, contrive to extract a vast amount of—I had almost written fun, but, remembering seas of earnest Teuton countenances, dare not say more than instruction from these manœuvres; and indeed

the duel of two army corps in a restricted area presents as much of war as can be comfortably taken in by the human eye, whatever the Imperial may be capable of embracing.

The manœuvres of September 1902 are memorable for several reasons. The presence of a foreign Commander-in-Chief and War Minister was in itself remarkable, but still more so when the significance of their presence is grasped. To the world it appeared in the nature of a political compliment; to a soldier—and the German Emperor is a soldier before he is a politician—it was a sign and a portent that uneasiness had suddenly pervaded the greatest and most complacent military organisation the world has ever seen. During the last few years the inexactness of the science of war has been strangely illuminated, and the reminder has come as an undoubted shock to the scientists whose eager and unremitting work seemed to have met with its reward in the reduction of this unruly inexact to exact and manageable mechanism. It would be absurd to imagine more than this from the Boer campaign. In the minds of the German staff it has produced no such certainty as that which, I believe rightly, has been borne to the minds of our own authorities. But it has produced doubt, and to men who have grown grey in seek-

ing after certainty, whose very existence seems to depend upon the discovery of certainty, who believed that they had discovered it, doubt is the most uncomfortable invader in the world. Hence Lord Roberts in the holy of holies of German war, the inventor, or rather the discoverer, of the new war; and Mr Brodriek, the man whose duty it has become to put the new patent on the British market. No trait in the German character is more admirable than their willingness to learn or at least inquire into fresh knowledge, and nothing is more certain than that the crowd of earnest, almost fanatical, soldiers who rode behind the Kaiser in September were deriving positive comfort from the fact that the British Commander-in-Chief rode with their master, and from his experience of his thousands scattered over the South African veldt was pointing morals at the masses of men in movement around him. That is what every German hoped Lord Roberts was asked over to Frankfurt to do, and even in the cheers of the crowds in the streets of Berlin and Frankfurt, more hearty by far than Germans are wont to raise at the sight of a foreigner, could be heard the homage of a people to one who was able, and might not be unwilling, to throw fresh light upon an art vital to them all.

The manœuvres themselves were of deep interest, but detailed description of such exercises might well weary readers in whose ears the sound of bursting shells has

but just ceased ringing, whilst the sight of real blood yet lingers in their eyes. Those who have had to gaze upon war look lightly upon his phantom. The *locus* and *casus belli*, the strategy and tactics, will be treated briefly, and the reader who finds the account yet long, must remember the dimensions of even this fractional exposition of German war.

A hostile army, bent on the invasion of Germany, represented by the 5th Army Corps, marching westwards from out of infinity, had seized upon Posen, and constituting this fortress as its base, was beyond it and ready for further conquest by September 7. Between it and Berlin the 3rd Army Corps, whose habitat is Frankfurt on the Oder, lay, the nearest of the many obstacles to be surmounted before the triumphal march down the Unter den Linden could be thought of. On the 7th it too was concentrated facing eastwards, ready to march against the invader with roughly forty-two battalions of infantry, six regiments of cavalry, and forty batteries of artillery. Over against it, twenty miles west of Posen, lay thirty-eight battalions of infantry, five companies of mounted infantry, six regiments of cavalry, a battery of machine guns, and thirty-eight batteries of artillery. Between the two, in the fork of the Oder and the Warthe, stretched some hundred miles of rolling, wooded country, studded with what in South Africa would be called *pans* and *vleis*, a chain of which

almost bisects the expanse from north to south. Two lines of railway converging at Meseritz, two others coming in from the flanks, two main and innumerable smaller roads, formed the communications of both sides, with the advantage of direction and convenience slightly in favour of the defenders. On September 8 both armies broke cover and pushed out in search of each other, the defenders, or Blue force, bringing down a strong flank guard composed of the Guards Infantry Division by train to Landsberg, twenty-five miles to the north-east. A thoughtful piece of generalship this, practically ensuring the safety of Frankfurt from the north; somewhat over-bold for war, perhaps, and rather too quick for manoeuvres. The rest of the defending army, which in war would probably have been also taken out by train in line with the Guards, marched fifteen miles to Reppen and Drossen, where it bivouacked. There was no fighting on this day. The most advanced cavalry felt each other from Schermeissel and Lagow respectively, but only an occasional long-range carbine-shot rang from the edges of the thick pine-woods. One daring act of war was performed, however. In Zielenzig, well behind the Blue cavalry screen, the writer was astounded to see skulking down a side-street an officer's patrol of the hostile Dantziger Hussars. They moved through the village unmolested, and disappeared westwards, to be next heard of at Reppen, fifty miles from their starting-point,

amongst the Blue main body itself, which they observed, reported on by telegraph, and finally escaped. The position of the forces when they went into bivouac at night was as follows: *Blue* (defending) Army Corps, infantry in front of Drossen and Reppen, with outposts at Görbitz facing Sternberg, at Langenfeld facing Zielenzig. Guard Division main body along the northern edge of the vast Königswalder Forest; advanced guard, with cavalry, at Blesen and Schwerin on the south of the Forest, facing east. *Red* (invading) Army disposed obliquely facing N.W. from the cavalry on the left at Lagow to the 41st Infantry Division at Betsche, with the 9th and 10th Infantry Divisions between at Brätz and Schierzig respectively. So that it would appear as if the Red commander had already premonition of an as yet unfelt menace to his right flank from the direction of Landsberg, since his force was so soon swung out of the true line of its bluff westerly advance in order to confront it.

Early on the 9th the (Red) 41st Infantry Division, advancing N.W. from Betsche, collided with the head of the (Blue) Guards columns marching S.E., and was unable to make further headway. The premonition was realised. And the Red cavalry, moving in a somewhat too stately array towards the threatened flank, came under a heavy artillery fire as they debouched beyond the village of Tempel. Some beautiful manoeuvring followed, in which the cavalry, admirably handled, and supported

by the rapid fire of their own artillery, gained their point, the right flank of the army, though with considerable loss. The dangerous work of covering their left flank during this northward advance was productive of many little cavalry combats most exciting to witness, and undoubtedly a true picture of this phase of war. Almost at every moment scout would encounter scout, and patrol patrol, amongst the folds of ground and the edges of the copses west of Tempel, until the whole of the left flank of the division trotting northwards became a fringe of scurrying, wheeling horsemen. Once two regiments of Uhlans, moving out to strengthen this flank, came suddenly under a rapid shell fire from a new hostile battery. When all the air was full of talk about "Boer tactics," it came almost as a shock to see these regiments immediately, and it may be wagered unconsciously, adopting the surprising manœuvre of the Boer commando which first sustained the British artillery fire at the battle of Ingogo Heights in 1881, and instead of retiring, galloping *ventre à terre* straight towards the guns for cover observable beneath them. Meanwhile the movements of the Blue cavalry about Neudorf and Grunzig, though active enough, were not very intelligible; and beyond a charge on a small scale in a remote corner of the field, they appeared to make little impression on the hostile squadrons manœuvring across the Tempel plain. The

latter, as aforesaid, made good their point, settling down at Ober-Görzig for the night; whilst the 41st Division of Red infantry, the only foot engaged so far, bivouacked behind Kurzig, the 10th Infantry Division around Pieske, the 9th behind Langenpfehl and Schönnow, with outposts along the Buchwald. Of the Blue force the cavalry fell back to Gleissen; the Guards held Blesen, Weissensee, and Neudorf as their forward line; the 6th Division had its outposts in front of Grochow; and the 5th Division, detached to guard the right flank, from behind the Lagow Lakes watched and overlapped the enemy's 9th Division lying along the eastern edge of the Buchwald. On this night, therefore, the long lines of bivouac fires glimmered less than three miles apart; and a great combat impended for the morrow.

Soon after dawn on the 10th the armies closed. The Reds struck first, with the 41st Division at the Guards Division towards Neudorf, with the 10th Division at the 6th Division along the Tempel Road, with the 9th Division at the 5th through the great Buchwald above Lagow. The first of these attacks produced most stubborn and realistic fighting. It was as necessary to the actual safety of the Red Force to beat back the Guards as it was for the latter to defeat, or at least check, the invaders for the salvation of Germany, and long and doubtful the combat raged along the wooded ridges across the Blesen

road. The onset of the Reds was a curious mixture of the old and the new; line after line swept up the slopes, in great curves and arcs wonderfully like the real thing, the men extended to about five paces, and, as soldiers will when called upon to breast an ascent, moving irritatingly athwart instead of directly up it. But a tremendous fire pouring upon them from the woods above stayed them no more than if the Guards Division had been squibbing at them with Brown Bess, and the attack became absurd in its speed and callousness. It succeeded, however: the Guards were much strung out, and a mass of men seizing a wood re-entering into their position, were held to have won the ridges. So the Guards retired a little way, still fighting—to the least accustomed eye defeated, but, to coin a word, umpirically. The 41st Division, victorious but exhausted, fell back to Tempel.

In the centre the troops of the Red 10th Division, going great guns through Tempel, with multitudinous artillery firing their hardest over their heads, came tempestuously upon the Blue 6th Division before its somewhat pedantic deployment was complete. The Blue men fought hard, and their artillery salvoed back as if determined to stay the Red columns by noise alone. Exceedingly rapid is German artillery fire: as the reports rolled from every portion of the field like the rapid beating of a great bass drum, the expression "a storm of shrap-

nel" became something more than a hyperbole, and the writer, remembering the comparatively trifling rain which beat upon the front row at Colenso and other places, found himself offering up silent prayers for the souls of the long lines placidly moving under the suppositious canopy of projectiles.

The Blues, I say, fought hard, but they had to turn and seek Schermeissel again, an ill wind that blew good of the very best to the spectator, in that it allowed an exposition of two of the most choice of German military specialities, the pursuit and the rear-guard action. Ney himself could not have taken up covering positions more quickly and bluffed more vigorously from them than did the commander of the Blue rear-guard. But that officer, harassed no doubt by a stage-managing umpire, somewhat spoilt his Redinhas by too premature retirements, and the main body, whose buffer he should have been, received more buffeting than they had a right to expect. But the pursuit was magnificent. The run after a running foe is the cream of German tactics: I believe their generals dream of it as ours do of a gallop from Piper Hole to the Curate's Gorse. What terror will hang on the rear of the army flying before their blue-coated battalions, if ever an army must so fly! Before the worsted Blues had even faced about, long Red columns were gathering along the Tempel *chaussée*, whilst fifty guns edged along with

them, waiting for the word to trot. The discovery that the enemy's centre was beaten, and that only a rear-guard held his line, was made quickly, too quickly perhaps for real war, and in a moment the long columns were stepping out, and the fifty guns bouncing past and ahead of them, with the lean, under-fed, overbred-looking horses showing every bone in their bodies as they strained at their long, slinging trot. Through Grochow swept the pursuit: looking down from the top of the long hill up which the village climbs, the narrow street seemed choked with troops of all arms, but like a mighty rush of water propelled through an upturned hose, they were all surging swiftly one way. And at the mouth of the lane, where it debouches on the downs overlooking Schermeissel, they emerged and opened out, gazing triumphantly down into the broad valley over which the retiring Blues were hurrying in long columns, which wriggled with the speed and agitation of wounded snakes. It was just such a chance for the artillery as was presented to the British guns after Talana, only that here, instead of a drifting cloud of horsemen, vast parallelograms of slow-moving infantry were rolling away over the plain. And here the chance was seized: the resonant peal from the line of guns grew longer and louder, as battery after battery rattled out of the mouth of the lane and swept into line alongside their predecessors.

But even German guns have an end, and their arm is not as long as some of the gunners, unwilling to turn the grey tubes off the receding columns, seemed to imagine. The defeated Blue 6th Division crept out of sight at last, to pursue its weary and despondent way to Gleissen. Meanwhile a distant and prolonged uproar of musketry away to the southward, rising and falling like the sound of the winter wind outside a window, told of a great fight in progress in the recesses of the Buchwald. There is something ominous in the murmur of far-off musketry; the crash of rifles close at hand seems far less menacing. In the great forest the Red 9th and the Blue 5th Divisions were locked in that most murderous of all combats, wood-fighting; the West Wood at Sharpsburg itself could not have rung with more tremendous discharges of musketry. The issue was long doubtful, as it always has been, and will be, even when inferior fighting men are snapping at each other through trees. But here, too, the Blues had to go, and even a soldier might be glad that the umpire who bade them turn was not the bloody one of death, who has so often pointed from the fringe of forest trees. So the 5th Division went; standing, however, so fiercely and noisily upon the order of its going, that its conquerors pursued no farther than Schermeissel, and left it to regain Zielenzig in peace.

That night the god of German war came to his people's aid and wrought a miracle, making

of two Turks one Turk, of two cavalry divisions one cavalry corps of proportions so stately and heroic that he was fain to command it himself. It took form at Weissensee and lay around the tent of its creator, a tent last used on the mystical plains of Palestine. But miracles in war are uncomfortable things: even so far back as the battle of Lake Regillus it is recorded that "pale grew every cheek" at the intervention of supernatural aid. And here, this Mahatma of a cavalry corps so suddenly precipitated into an instructive "situation" drew many disparaging remarks upon its impossible self from the military student a-hungering for reality. However, there it was, brooding like a thundercloud upon the Red right flank, 7000 sabres—cuirassiers, uhlans, hussars of many colours, horse artillery and machine guns, a pretty dish indeed to set before a king.

Black care could not sit behind so many horsemen, and the spirits of the desponding Blues rose with a bound at this accession of strength and royalty. Fiercely did they dash next day, September the 11th, upon all points of the enemy's line, the 5th and 6th Divisions upon the 9th and 10th about Schermeissel and Grochow, the Guards upon the 41st Division in front of Tempel. The action upon the left was stubborn and bloody, attack and counter-attack swept across the plains and through the cop-pices. The Red 9th Division, smitten in flank, gave back; the 10th sprang forward to its assistance, rolled back the on-

slaught, and when the next great Blue wave came on, stood in line with its comrade division to receive it. On the right the Guards, coming down from Falkenwalde, encountered their conquerors of the day before with such determination that the Red 41st Division gave to the shock from the very first. This last infantry assault was a spectacle as splendid, and to our ideas as old-fashioned, as the pictures of the battle of the Alma, which indeed it much resembled. The Reds crowned a low ridge above a long glaciais of grass, and would have wrought fearful slaughter amongst the heavy lines rolling towards them despite the rapid thumping of the latter's artillery, pushed well forward to cover the advance. The lines glided swiftly forwards, were checked, were reinforced, then the whole Guards Division swept up the bare slope and closed with their enemy with a grand cheer, whilst the colours rose and dipped and wavered upon the sky-line with the most exciting imitation of what colours would do in a real hurly-burly of such ferocity. But colours! Good lack, who would have thought to see the silken souls of regiments so near perdition as the van of a modern assaulting line! Backstaggered the 41st Division, to stand no more.

And indeed their position was desperate enough to demoralise any troops. Every man knew that his side was to be beaten that day, a consciousness not at all alien from real war, and it was quite amusing to notice the cheerful

alacrity with which the lines of the 41st Division turned in retreat, every man with his eye over his left shoulder watching towards Weissensee for the, as yet, invisible thunder-cloud which was to overwhelm him. The soldiers were looking forward to their destruction as much as any one, and why not? It is surely rare enough that people butchered to make a holiday can enjoy the holiday! But the thunder-cloud tarried, the retirement slowed down; up on the low kopje whence the Empress watched, it ceased altogether, and the picture of the graceful Queen sitting upon her horse, close in front of a firing line of recumbent infantrymen, must have gone to every German heart. Then far away to the north-east appeared black shadows flitting across the hillsides, shadow after shadow, and amidst the woods great glitterings, as if sunlit pools had suddenly appeared below the trees. They disappeared and reappeared, no longer shadows and pools, but definite masses of horsemen with a lake of light on the lance points above them. The Kaiser was coming, woe to the 41st Division! But the latter, with something ridiculously like a sigh of relief, heaved themselves up and continued the retirement, passed a belt of wood, and were crossing a valley beyond when the stroke fell. And what a stroke! Up from the Pieske road in echelon of brigades rushed the Cavalry Corps, and flooded the valley as if a dam had burst and let out a flood of gorgeous horsemen. The air was rent by the

terrible discharges of case shot and musketry which tore down to meet them; but no sound could drown that of the multitudinous hoofs which thundered upon the turf, nor that of the seven thousand bits and curb-chains and steel scabbards clattering and jingling under the "innumerable laughters" of the sea of lance pennons fluttering in the wind of the gallop. The 41st Division melted before them, and they stormed over the place where it had been. At the head of the valley the guns and howitzers roared terribly at the sight, but their own time was come. In a moment they were smothered with horsemen, and amidst a tremendous cheer from slayers and slain alike, the great charge pulled up in a seething mass of variegated troopers on the far side of the obliterated Red line of battle.

The excitement over the extended field was long in subsiding. It resembled nothing so much as that which clamours over Epsom Downs when a Derby favourite has disappeared victorious into the paddock. Then the action, like that of a modern drama, was stopped to accommodate the "star." There was a pause of half an hour, during which the huge cavalry corps pulled itself together and lay in orderly repose, the men lolling dismounted amid a herd of horses and a forest of lances, whilst the great masses of infantry lay at ease as far as the eye could reach around. After which the retreat and pursuit commenced again, some stubborn fighting occurring south of the *chaussée*

near Grochow, where the Blues trod too closely on the tail of the flying Reds, and, to the writer's eyes at least, got handsomely stung for their pains. By the windmill east of Schermeissel I witnessed a most furious fire-fight at close quarters. The Red rearguard turning to bay, in some steep and broken ground south of the road, a most powerful and determined attempt to rush them from their position was made by the impetuous Blues. But the Reds from their jagged crest poured down a tempest of fire, to which the Blues, checked and awaiting their supports, replied as fiercely—the long and dense lines fairly howled at each other across the highroad less than 400 yards apart. Then the Blues surged forward again, rippled up the steep, like water filling a basin, and the crest-line, after one more tremendous eruption of fire, was silent, as the Red rearguard melted best pace down the reverse of their lost position. But the eye turned instinctively to the slopes and low ground to look for the black patches which string out behind such on-slaughts like the tail behind a kite. And had this been war what swathes of blue-coated dead had darkened the green turf, cut from the dense ranks hurled all too swiftly, too callously, without the fire-support of either infantry or artillery, against a strongly manned natural fortress. Thus the great battle trailed away southward, growing feebler as the day waned: its occasional outbursts appeared to its magnificent occurrences of the fore-

noon as the popping of loose cartridges after the explosion of a powder-magazine. And when after a long diminuendo it finally sang itself to rest, the bivouac-fires of the Red force winked out again one by one, from the Kalau Forest past Liebenau and Neudörfel to Mösteben above the great Nischlitz lake. A strong position, commanding three defiles, with its flanks resting upon the impassable obstacles of lake and forest, with three main roads by which to escape if again worsted. Von Stulpnägel was playing grimly his losing game, standing at bay like the boar of his fatherland, and even when running before the pack striking with quick lunges back over his shoulder. There would be another great action on the morrow; and as I wandered amongst the bivouacs, amongst the long field-kitchens sending aromatic promise of the evening meal to the grave German soldiers lying mostly in silence around them, in trying to picture to myself the night of Gravelotte, I recalled that of Pieters Hill, and from the two a foreshadow of the next Gravelotte and Pieters Hill rose like a spectre over the thousands lying in the shallow valleys before me.

But the fight next day completed the ruin of the Reds, and once again upon the hapless 41st Division of the right, already decimated, fell Von Lignitz's heaviest strokes. The combat opened with an artillery duel. The Reds had seventy-two guns in line, and these, opening upon the skirmishers and advanced batteries

of the Guards' Division showing north of Hochwalde, called uproariously for half an hour upon heaven and earth and all the elements to witness their last stand. But one by one the Blue batteries came into action, their fire became equal, then apparently superior to that of the Reds, and the Guards, sweeping forward with reckless speed and disregard of cover, swooped upon the edge of the Kalau Forest as if they were determined to finish the job at one fell blow. They were roughly handled. Again and again the gallant Reds flung themselves upon them in counter-attack, often checking, once, to every eye but that of an umpire, plainly rebuffing them. But the Guards were not to be denied, and they butted so furiously at the enemy's line that at last they caved it in. The Reds retired to seek a new position. But as they left Kalau, lo! to their desperate eyes appeared again the imperial miracle from Weissensee, 7000 cavalry plumb on their line of retreat!

A bolt from the Blue indeed; nothing now for the Reds but to die like men. There was just time to unlimber and shell the menacing mass, and they shelled it hard: had that been shrapnel the mass would have heaved and wriggled most gratifyingly. But here it only surged forward, swung and swayed a little in a solemn, orderly fashion as its components wheeled into formation, then with all the majestic thunder and many-toned tinnabulation of yesterday it rolled once more over the Red

array from end to end, and swept it from the insulted soil of Germany. The manoeuvres were over.

Such grandeur of spectacle as they had presented, such whole-souled earnestness, such breadth and boldness of management, incline the spectator to unreserved praise. It is necessary to fight against the inclination, and to consider carefully how much of that which has dazzled is but magnificent dust thrown in the eyes. There is much, of course, in the German army for which no praise can be too great. The work of the staff, for instance; how perfect the manipulation of the machine which owes its own perfection to the wise heads and industrious hands which have contrived it. To a Briton an officer of the German general staff is a kind of admirable monstrosity. He is not a staff officer first and other things afterwards,—a sportsman or a man of letters, for instance, like many of our own. He is a staff officer first, and nothing afterwards; he is *all* staff officer, steeped in the multifarious knowledge the term implies, and in love with his knowledge. To him no greater shame could come than a military exigency to which he found himself unequal. Such a one rarely comes,—it never comes. Every German officer "knows his business," that is a mere commonplace of the trade, and attracts no attention whatever; but the German staff officer is an expert in his business, a man whose unremitting application has been crowned by a prize he must still toil night and day to

retain, the loss of which he would not care to survive. It is easy to understand the result. There is probably not in all trades, professions, or societies soever a group of men more sufficient for the work to be done. The German staff is a body of soldiers already the most learned in their profession the world has ever seen, yet still learning and still keen to learn. Their humility would be surprising were it not a common attribute of accomplished gentlemen. They are thus twice blest, for knowledge is but one degree a greater power than the desire for knowledge.

Of the regimental officer the most marked feature is his extraordinary earnestness. I speak as a fool, or as an Englishman speaking of the profession of arms, which is the same thing. He too is in business, and whether on manœuvres or pottering about amongst his silent stubby company in barracks, very much *on business*. He appears slow, yet it is the slowness of a lexicographer — thorough, searching, industrious. His pottering has no vagueness in it, but rather an intensity of method which would probably supply the place of regulations even if he were not governed by so many and those so stringent. An Englishman, again, might wish him a trifle more *bonhomie*; for he cannot “frivole,” cannot the German officer: his uniform, of which he is as proud as Punch, precludes that. He is always a little stiff, a little solemn, a little sad. Even in a café he must

keep a wary and respectful eye upon superior rank refreshing itself at the next table; and even if that be empty, a glance downward at his brass buttons and his handsome grey cloak freezes at once his eye, which was beginning perhaps to lighten a little at the cheerfulness and chatter of the café around him. But he is true metal, and the great eight million man-power engine to which he belongs loses nothing of its efficiency through him; nor of its dignity, which, considering his life in uniform, in restaurant, and public garden, is little short of a marvel.

Eight million man-power!

Some years ago the imagination, so the reporters told us, was apt to “reel” at figures like these. It does not reel now, it rather steadies itself to calculate coolly, with map and scale and logarithms, exactly what the potentiality, the foot-pound force, of this tremendous docile weight may be. For we have got used to colossal armies, and to such a nicety of pitch have our computations regarding them attained that the smallest alteration in their long ranks of figures is considered to affect correspondingly the chances of Europe's peace. Does Germany add a battalion, or France deny itself a battery, the Bourse, like the fluttering pulse of a patient, beats the tune of the symptom at once. Arithmetically there is little more to be learned about them, and to the arithmetical school of statesmen and soldiers the issue of the next war will be computable on the

back of a visiting-card as soon as it is declared. But the arithmetical school has been as sadly disconcerted as discredited since the Transvaal war,—at any rate its British contingent, no small one a few years back. To no men more than to the prophets and pundits of our military world is war during a long peace in danger of becoming an academism. The obtrusive, ever-recurring, insoluble x which the presence of war suddenly introduces into their problems checks the smooth flow of calculation like grit in the works of a watch. It is of course the old enemy of man-made machinery, from railway-signals to fighting lines, the human element, the fatigue, the fears, the fury, the folly, the forgetfulness, and all the other “*f*’s” of the man who as an integer on paper has none of these things. An enemy as old indeed as man himself, which had to be combated by the first commander of the first fighting force which ever existed. But an enemy which bulks ever larger, as war, as if resenting the artificial panoply with which science has encased its natural crudity, reverts more and more to first principles, and draws more and more upon the natural human qualities of the humble humans called upon to wage it. Of that there is no doubt: as I have written elsewhere, the days of single combat with mace and pike did not, paradoxical as it may seem, wring from a soldier so much of his personal manliness to enable him to bear himself gallantly

in the field as the long days of unemotional, unexciting exposure to invisible death of modern war. The tension then was that which braces a prize-fighter, heavy but even fiercely pleasurable; now it is that joyless strain which wears out an engine-driver, and sends him with jangling nerves into premature idleness, often to an early grave. It may seem strange to call human nature an enemy: that it is so in war must be confessed even by a nation so blessed as our own in the matter of the native worth of its common men. War, speak and write as loftily as you will, sends nothing along with, everything against, the inclination of a man. It is like that place where the river meets the sea, the sweet waters the bitter, always a confused tumble, sometimes an angry tidal wave, which, sweeping up against the placid stream, overwhelms three of man’s most precious ideals—comfort, security, and beauty.

The military *moral*, therefore, of the millions pledged and bound to act the wave, to rush uphill when they would glide along the level, to rage when they would placidly work or dream, is a matter of tremendous importance to the institutions dependent upon it, such, for instance, as the German monarchy and empire. Yet it is not exactly on this *moral* that light is wanted, but on the thousand things less than that which in battle will be as great. *Moral* is hardly a term in the personal equation; it is more a portion of the general equipment of an

army, as indispensable as its guns, and a force as calculable and almost as procurable as they, quite remote from that intangible force which real war has taught us to be unresolvable until war is upon us, and unteachable, unalterable, invaluable then. "The man behind the gun"; catchwords have a way of epitomising many an indescribable problem. Of the German man behind the German gun, though every military particle seem to be known—his boots, the contents of his pockets, his endurance, his discipline,—though all these are known, and, as is the custom of Germans dealing with knowledge, neatly and accurately tabulated, yet that which will dominate the whole in war, his human naturalness in the presence of modern war, is not known, and this the writer made some effort to deduce from what appeared of it during the great manœuvres whose outlines have been sketched. Let it be granted at once that they afforded field for but the haziest of deduction. A sneer is apt to arise to English lips at the word manœuvres, and visions of slackness, unreality, bored officers and sleepy men to his eyes. British soldiers, even the least intelligent, scarcely expected to make war in war-time as they made it in peace, and when war came none were surprised at their own ignorance of it. Yet to a German something of the spirit as well as the body of war dwells on the mimic field. To him every field-day is a forecast; as he fought therein he will fight on that great day (a certainty to him) when his

empire, created by war, shall have to create war to maintain itself. To him his peace practices are so momentous that even when new experience hints that they may be partially erroneous or even fatal, he will stick to them fast until the hint is converted in his mind to an indisputable fact. If it be not so converted, he will stick to them for ever, even intensifying them, arguing with perfect justice that the more the training of an army is in danger of becoming old-fashioned the severer must it be to make up its disadvantage. He laughs at the airy facility with which we English discover and adopt new systems of fighting, or rather snatch them piecemeal from every small war which takes place. Nor does he lend an attentive ear to every little journalist who imagines himself qualified by having seen a war to legislate upon the art of war. All very well for an army of thousands, he thinks; with a bagatelle like that one may perhaps play tricks, but it is a serious thing to experimentalise with millions,—with millions, too, designed not for many tasks but one task, to oppose not many formations but one formation, which latter, he hears from Chalons or Orleans, fulfils annually the military desideratum of being upon the same lines but not so good as his own. So, to repeat, the fighting between Posen and Frankfurt, if not a counterpart, was at least a foreshadow of reality; from its bloodless incidents might be conjured many a bloody vision of the future. And as the great tragedian

cannot help revealing now and then that which is so much more interesting than his *rôle*, himself, so there were moments when the veil seemed to be lifted from the thousands rehearsing their tragedy on the plains of Eastern Prussia.

The history of his battles attests the bravery and endurance of the German private soldier: he has been stubborn in defence, determined in attack, stout on the march, a formidable fighting man. Is there, then, anything in his nature which may render him less formidable under the long tension of modern war, under the high explosive shells blowing him up at seven miles, under the hose of musketry playing upon him for hours? There are, or appear to be, some things. Dependence and docility, his dominant traits, were never the most valuable of military qualities; the greatest feats of infantry have not been owing to these but to their opposites. What manner of men were they who charged at Albuera, and hit back at Soult on the Corunna road, may be gathered from the letters and despatches of the time. Adaptability, on the other hand, the capacity of the individual to adjust himself rapidly and without assistance to the ever-varying conditions of a combat, has come to be a necessity, and the German soldier does not possess it. All troops have their genius, which, bad or good, is not to be excoriated. That of the Germans will probably preclude for ever the elasticity which is the essence of successful modern war. Even should the letter of the

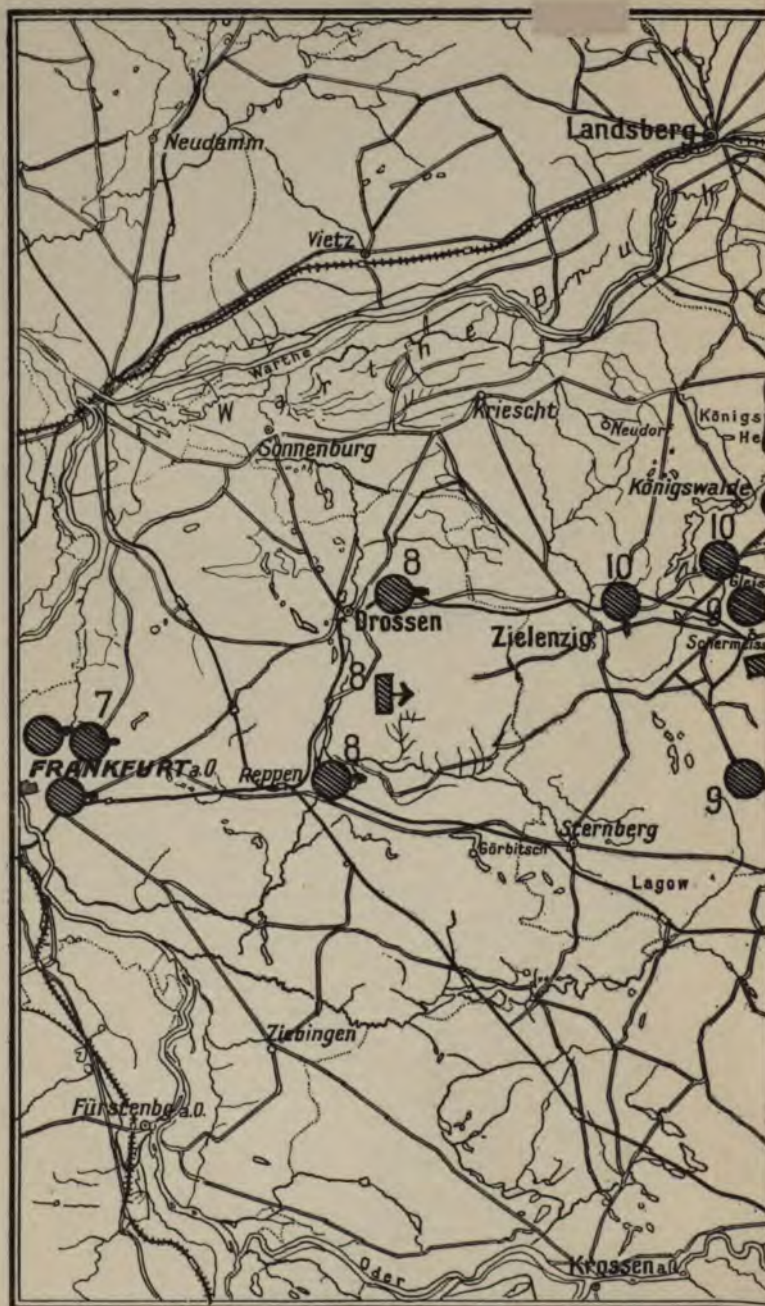
loose, shallow, and pliant formations, imperative under long-range fire, be observed, the spirit will escape them. For it is counter to the fighting instinct of the private soldier, to his love of company, of pompous order and visible, audible authority. The long, almost ungovernable, lines of attack will be composed of men yearning for the compact machinery of subjection, which is more necessary to them than cover itself. Every dreadful interval blown out of the ranks—and they will be many and wide—will increase the desire of control whilst rendering it less possible, and the assault will arrive within striking distance ragged, thinned, and, worst of all, unsuperintended. But it will arrive. It does not do, as many do, to ignore old war in guessing at the new. A British battalion moving into action does well to think of Inkerman, and the memory of that old-fashioned fight is an accession of strength to it; so to a German regiment will be the recollection of St Privat and Mars La Tour. The sustaining of terrible losses with steadfastness has ever been a speciality of the German infantry.

Death is death, whether it come by the rough blow of a chasseur bullet or by that of the swift and silent mauser. It is, in fact, an uglier thing by the former, and it is the ugliness of death even more than the frequency of its visitations which shakes troops. The argument, therefore, common with foreign critics of the late manoeuvres, that the men simply will not face the losses they will have to suffer if the

present close, or comparatively close, formations shall be adhered to, I believe to be erroneous. They will face them, but it is probable that their courage will but render the failure of their attacks more utter and the success more useless. The attack requires either weight or length. Weight is unattainable unless the preliminary advance can be preserved from undue losses, which it cannot be in deep or close formation, whilst length is a mere danger to troops uncomfortable with wide intervals and extensions, as I surmise the German troops to be. The training of the German infantry in the attack is, therefore, somewhat at a deadlock. And attack, let it be remembered, is rightly the very soul of German war; all else is subsidiary to it, all their strategy is based upon it. If it fail, Samson's locks are shorn indeed. To no army in Europe is the discovery of the power of the magazine rifle such a poser. Yet if, which God forbid, their millions are ever again called to arms, the puzzle must be solved long before. For the German private soldier again, however much he may learn before a war, will learn nothing in war. His mind is cast in a different mould to that of our own Atkins, a most malleable fellow, who in South Africa took to new conditions like a duck to water, and improved upon innovations to beat the innovators. What the German has learned he has learned with a thoroughness of which no other human being is capable.

What he has not learned the fear of death itself, swift tutor though it be, will not induce him to practise.

When an army is defeated in battle its salvation, let the text-books say what they will, depends more upon the innate value and loyalty of the soldiers than upon any disciplinary codes; and the larger the army the more this is the case, for anarchy lurks ever in terrified or despondent mobs. A British army has never in all history been defeated in the sense of having its power of recuperation destroyed; for inextinguishable loyalty, the child of free-will and the cause of free service, permeating the rank and file, has rendered a *débauché* impossible. Conscription is a great juggler in the Fatherland: it takes the traders and leaves trade uninjured; it invades without dislocating civil life; it seals the bodies of men to itself without either quenching or setting fire to their spirits, — these are wonderful feats, visible to all beholders. But it is impossible to help doubting the genuineness of its greatest miracle of all, the creation of a military spirit, whose splendour is impressed upon you by every German soldier with an insistence almost pathetic, quite unconvincing. They do protest too much. Conscription as yet has herded the nation only to success: the spirit which bears up and grows stouter under disaster, the inspiration of the free alone in every business under the sun, how shall it dwell in millions who are not free?



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BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

No. MXLVI.

DECEMBER 1902.

VOL. CLXXII.

CAMPAIGNING WITH KITCHENER.

BY A STAFF OFFICER.

THE future biographer of Viscount Kitchener will experience many difficulties when he endeavours to trace the reconquest of the Sudan in the archives of the Egyptian War Office. None of our generals before Kitchener ever attempted, still less succeeded in attempting, to wage war without orders, without forms, without states or *paperasserie* of any sort or kind. A normal year's campaign in the Sudan began with the issue of the *ordre de bataille* to those concerned, and ended with the promulgation of the Queen's congratulations at the close of the war. The rest of the usually voluminous documents incidental to campaigning are wanting, for the best of all reasons — namely, that none ever existed.

When the average Aldershot general takes the field he has

foisted on him a mass of phenomenally useless documents, which do more to cause general trouble and paralysis than any acts of the enemy: I could name a campaign not a thousand miles from Suakin that was entirely ruined by them. But Kitchener's office stationery consisted of a sheaf of telegraph-forms which he carried in his helmet and a pencil which he carried in his pocket — and that sufficed. Moreover, he seldom read an official letter, and never wrote one, and how much wear and tear was thereby saved let those say who have had the misfortune to serve under generals afflicted with the curse of penmanship. I do not offer it as a model for imitation, first, because Kitcheners do not grow on every tree, and next, because the conditions of one campaign are never exactly re-

VOL. CLXXII.—NO. MXLVI.

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produced in another. Even as it was, had anything happened to K., it would have taken Pall Mall and Cairo a few years to discover where and what the army was, and they would have been forced to resort to advertisements in the agony columns of the dervish newspapers to obtain elementary ideas on the subject.

Each commander of the units scattered all over that enormous strategic chessboard, from Cairo to Kassala and from Suakin to Korti, only knew, only was allowed to know, what he saw at the extremity of his sun-blistered nose. He had, say, four companies, a few camel corps orderlies, and so many days' supplies: he had an idea that Dick This or Harry The Other occupied a post or a well some hundreds of miles away; but whether the army had marched or fought, or won or had disappeared bodily into the Great Beyond, he never knew, and had grown tired of trying to discover. Why should he know or care? K. looked after that, K. looked after everything; and the very moment that the last pair of boots was worn out and the last mouthful of grain was being issued to the cattle, down dropped, like manna from heaven, a fresh supply in the nick of time, coming from goodness knows where, by road or rail or river: down it was dumped, and with a word and a blow away went the transport to serve some one else, who also thought that if he did not die of ennui he could make a tolerable certainty of starvation—and was always disappointed. And then one

fine day when he least expected it, and had come to reckon himself as a dead man out of mind, a few curt words came clicking off on the wires—"March in half an hour." And he marched, and all the others marched, and everybody marched, until he awoke on another fine morning at dawn to find he was with others, and that he and the others were the army. And how it was done he did not stop to inquire, was not indeed allowed time to ask, for all the news he got was to march again at dawn.

I remember well meeting Kitchener in 1897 and asking him when The Event was due to happen. "Thirteen months hence," was the answer. "Thirteen months!" I said; "that is a long time to wait." "Yes, it is," said K.; "but remember that some of us have been waiting for it for thirteen years."

A good slice out of the best years of a man's life! and what uphill work in all those years, all the forming and fashioning of the weapon by Wood and Grenfell, all the selection of the tools, the amassing of information by Wingate, the endless endeavour to get a quart of men pressed into the pint-pot of the Budget, the schemings and plottings by Staveley Gordon and poor Rogers to get the best weapons, the best supplies, the best artillery and most up-to-date equipment—to make, in short, a field army out of what the general public looked on as a most indifferent police, and looked on askance at that.

Oh those Budgets! what good stories could be told of them if some of the dead could speak and the living were not greatly tongue-tied! Half a million, not a penny more,—and do what you can with it: that was about the gist of the pro-consular ultimatum each year; and the problem was how to organise as a mobile army, equip, train, and feed 20,000 men or more on a credit only capable of supporting the armed forces of the Grand Duchy of Gerolstein.

But the pennies were saved here and cut there, and everybody did the work of three men until something was saved, and with this something there was purchased, very much under the rose and quite without the knowledge or concurrence of Pall Mall, quick-firing batteries, the latest plant, labour-saving machinery, and every sort and kind of new invention, until at last Kitchener, who had been the *deus ex machina* from first to last, set his steam-roller in motion and rolled the enemy flat.

The Cabinet Council that decided the advance on Dongola made a fortunate hit for their party, for Egypt, and for England. It was all so simple. There was a big map, fortunately not a large-scale map, on the table, and some one chanced to see Dongola written in big letters. What more natural than that Mr Chamberlain should remark, "Let's go to Dongola"? It sounded quite reasonable, and nobody made any objection. Off went a wire, and before Lord Cromer

had time to turn round, the army had taken wing. That was, literally and without exaggeration, the beginning of the reconquest of the Sudan.

Kitchener is one of the hardest and most accurate thinkers I can name: he is always thinking; not meandering aimlessly through a wilderness of casual imaginings, but thinking up and down and round and through his subject; planning every move, foreseeing every counter-move, registering every want, forestalling every demand, so that when he conducts a campaign with that unerring certainty that seems to recall the onward march of destiny, luck has had very little to do with the affair, for K. has arranged that everything shall happen as it does happen, and that particular way and no other.

Somewhere in the *oubliette* of Pall Mall there is a paper with the record of a meeting that took place at the Egyptian War Office before the final campaign. Only Kitchener, Wingate, and another officer were present. In less than two hours K. laid bare the entire plan of subsequent operations, met every inquiry, formulated every want, satisfied every objection. He had worked right through the campaign in his mind, and saw daylight on the farther side of it. Everything was ready: there were so many boats to take so many men and guns and animals at a certain fixed date, depending on the Nile flood, which could be calculated with precision; there were so many weeks'

supplies to be at this place and that, and the British contingent—calculated economically to the fraction of a guardsman by the order to leave band-boys behind—was requested to arrive at a certain given date, to steam and march to a certain point, to fight its usual battle 1600 miles from the chair in which K. was sitting, and to leave for London the very next day with its work accomplished. And all these things happened precisely as ordained at that meeting, so that one momentarily believed that even the unexpected had been banished from the art of war.

The gift of overcoming apparently insuperable difficulties which the Sirdar's officers possessed in such a marked degree was very largely due to the unbending severity with which he treated all failures, whether high or low were responsible for them. A thing was ordered: it had to be done, and consequently it was done; no excuses prevailed for an instant. So when an officer lost a Nile steamer through the stupidity of a subordinate he was a ruined man; when the wires failed to connect K. with his base at a critical moment, the young officer in charge lost all the fruits of his long and meritorious labours. If no chief ever acknowledged more fully and generously good work well done, no one also was ever more unforgiving of failure, to no matter what cause the failure might be due. Once in the hottest moment of a blazing Sudan summer I incautiously reported that D. had got sunstroke, and

therefore could not execute some order. "Sunstroke!" K. replied; "what the devil does he mean by having sunstroke: send him down to Cairo at once." However, D. being a friend of mine, I wired to warn him that he was under a delusion and was quite well, and the order was carried out, and nothing more heard of the matter, while poor D. lived to get himself handsomely killed before Mafeking.

On another occasion I took part in a river reconnaissance under Colin Keppel: we were aground for seventeen hours on a falling Nile in the middle of the Dervish army, and 100 miles from our outposts; and if Keppel had not been a handy man of the best type, we might have been there now. We had no small boats,—the Budget did not run to such luxuries,—but a raft was made out of odds and ends of timber, and the anchor, weighing about a ton, was ferried out on it to a sandbank by forty stalwart Gippies, working up to their necks in the water, and we got a bearing on the anchor, and hauled off with great difficulty. I told part of the story to K. on my return. "And how did you get the anchor to the sandbank?" he asked. "Oh," I answered, "one of the crew swam across with the anchor in his mouth." "Oh, really," was all K. said, as if it was the most natural thing in the world! If we had been in a worse plight, I really think he would have expected Keppel to swim back with the gunboat in his mouth, and would only have said, "Oh, Keppel, I want

you to kindly start again in half an hour. . . ."

Much of K.'s success was no doubt due to his wise choice of the tools he used—they really were tools rather than men; and no finer body of young fellows ever wore sword than those splendid officers who worked and slaved for him, day after day, in those God-forsaken sand-swept wastes. But no one knows, no one perhaps will ever fully know, the extent to which K. was implored, beseeched, cajoled by the highest in the land to employ A. or B. or C. on his staff, or anywhere. K. was adamant to such requests. I remember one case of a really first-rate officer, who came out armed with a letter from a very illustrious personage, almost amounting to a command, that the officer should be employed. The letter was duly delivered: whether it was answered or not I cannot say, but K. chose his own men and not other people's, and the officer in question, after kicking his heels in Cairo for several weeks, returned to London without hearing a word about employment. This happened in hundreds of cases. K. was not then the power he is now, and his implacable disregard of the pets of society argues a strength of character which has always seemed to me one of the greatest proofs of his fearless independence.

When Ian Hamilton came back from South Africa he is reported to have said that K.'s chief of the staff had nothing to do but smoke his pipe. That was certainly true in the Sudan,

and one can easily believe that the leopard does not change his spots. No general has ever been more entirely independent of the help of those immediately around him: not one of his tools was indispensable, nor even a dozen of them, though many did not realise the fact.

"Are you going to bring up General X. for this campaign?" I once asked him. "No, I don't think so," K. replied; "he is doing very well where he is, and on my staff he always *makes a channel*." K. hated channels, hated any strait-waistcoat which hampered and confined him, and here is an instance. This same X. had been very well brought up, and he liked to issue a sealed pattern daily order which was anathema to K., and the more as it was quite unnecessary when the army was all under his hand, and orders were best conveyed verbally. However, X. was so importunate that at last out of sheer weariness K. dictated an order, and X., full of a new and blissful sense of importance, hurried off to get it duly copied, registered, duplicated, sealed, signed, and delivered in the good old style. Meanwhile K. strolls out, and accidentally meets Broadwood, his cavalry commander. "Oh, Broadwood," says K., in that soft and almost deprecating drawl which some of his subordinates could mimic to the life, "will you kindly take four squadrons and a couple of guns and push on forty miles to clear up the situation, and start in half an hour." "Very good, sir," says Broadwood, who was a man of

few words. As the cavalry were jingling out of camp X. comes out of his tent with his orders hot from the press, and meets them. "Where are you off too?" exclaims X. Mutual explanations follow, when it is found that K.'s verbal orders are entirely different from those he dictated, and poor X. went back to his tent, and thenceforth gave up the issue of the daily order as a hopeless task.

K.'s officers took their cue from their chief's *sans gêne*, and imitated his methods. Once a general officer was inspecting a post on the line of communications, and duly arrived at the little hut which represented the headquarters of the majesty of the army in some wind-swept hole. Enter X., and looking round espies an office-table and two trays, one full of papers. Interested, he reads the label attached to each. The empty one was ticketed "Business" and the other "Bosh." "Excellent officer," purrs X.,—"thoroughly understands his work and Kitchener's methods." But when he went further, and proceeded to examine the papers in the "Bosh" tray, his feelings may be better imagined than described on finding that the documents consisted exclusively of his own voluminous orders and memoranda!

From an instinct of self-preservation nobody ever slept with more than one eye shut when K. was with the army. A sound sleeper was always in danger of finding himself alone in the desert, and the army gone. This actually happened to a worthy officer who was

rather hard of hearing. Some one whispered "Dervishes," and the army marched softly away without beat of drum in the usual half hour or less. The officer awoke, and in place of 20,000 men found nothing living in sight except two bald-headed vultures. It was very much the same thing on K.'s own staff. With the earliest glimmer of light the tall erect figure came slowly out from his lair in the bivouac, mounted, and rode silently away into the darkness. If a staff officer or A.D.C. noticed the flitting, he flung himself into the saddle and started in hot pursuit; but K. never said "Come," never cared or noticed if he was accompanied or not, and if the earth had opened and swallowed up his staff, I do not think he would have noticed it on his return.

But with this peculiarity, due largely to his powers of concentration, and to long years passed in self-sufficing, self-reliant lonesomeness, K. had one excellent custom, namely, of living in one mess with the whole of his very small staff, perhaps eight or nine men altogether, and of being always accessible to information and opinions of all sorts. He was thereby placed in close touch with that strange uncanny Will-o'-the-wisp, the spirit of the army, which some generals who live too much apart from and above their men never count with and never understand—to their own infinite loss and the army's. During many an evening in camp or bivouac

Kitchener often talked long, openly, and convincingly upon reforms needed in the War Office and the army. Of his opinions on these points it is too soon to speak, for he may yet have occasion to put them into practice. So I shall only say that many of his ideas were novel and all were radical, and that they are calculated to produce a very considerable fluttering in Pall Mall dovecots and among the old women of both sexes when Big Ben chimes out K.'s hour of office and responsibility.

No man ever kept his own counsel better than K. when fighting was afoot: there was never any leakage of information, because there was never any information to leak. Once when the enemy threatened our line of communications I expressed some anxiety about our wires, which were laid, for all the world to see, as a ground-line along the desert, glistening in the sun and bearing a meaning even to a dervish, which is saying a good deal. K. told me to ride down to the river-bank and say if I felt happier: down I went, and after diligent search discovered a second wire cunningly laid under the bush and sedges. As I was about to ride back I saw a steamer pushing off, and asked the young engineer officer on board what he was about: it turned out that he had personal instructions from K. to lay a third line of telegraph on the other bank of the Nile, and no one in the army but the chief and this young officer had wind of the matter. As-

surance was made not doubly but trebly sure. I always feel a confidence amounting to certainty that when K. arrives on the bank of the Styx he will saunter up with a Berthon boat under his arm: to think of his being dependent on the goodwill of an ill-conditioned ferryman in the passage of an unfordable river is not an idea that one's mind is able to contemplate for a moment.

Kitchener was the living providence of the army in the Sudan, just as Napoleon was for the *Grande Armée*—only the latter perished of cold and hunger, and the army in the Sudan thrived on heat and thirst. The fighting and manœuvring was done for K. as it was done for Napoleon, very largely by subordinates, Hunter, Gatacre, and a bevy of impossibly youthful colonels, many of whom, alas! like the chivalrous Wauchope, the dashing Le Gallais, and that fine soldier Benson, have since fallen at the head of their columns on the blood-stained battle-fields of South Africa.

K. was no drill-master, and having been so long occupied with administration, so long exiled from training-grounds of all arms, was at first a little out of his element when he took personal and direct command of a large mixed force in our mediæval battles, in which steady drill was an essential and early Victorian formation the rule rather than the exception.

But even here the character of the man came out: it was not K. who adapted himself to

the drill-book but *vice versa*. While we were waiting for Mahmud near the Atbara, ready to pounce on him whichever road of advance he selected, K. had the infantry and guns out in the desert day after day, and there first regulated and perfected the formations which served us so well, and were employed in all the marching and fighting up to the end of the campaign. But he proceeded in his own way, discarding all precedents of the drill-ground as useless lumber, and basing his dispositions upon the habits and tactics of the enemy and upon nothing else. And, after all, how history repeated itself. Read the story of Napoleon's and Kléber's fights in Egypt, and see the close affinity between our tactics and theirs: go farther back and read in Gibbon of the march of the Roman army up the Euphrates against Sapor, King of Persia: there was our march up the Nile reproduced in facsimile hundreds and hundreds of years before, with such weird similitude that one often seemed to have dropped out of one's own era and to be transported back to another age by some strange fantastic genii of the desert.

It was very curious to watch what Napoleon called *l'enfantement d'un projet* in Kitchener's mind. Napoleon at such a moment was always in a state of nervous exaltation and irritability, *comme une jeune fille qui accouche*, as he more forcibly than elegantly expressed it. Kitchener, on the other hand, was quite the reverse: he became more and more taciturn

and morose, more reserved, more impenetrable, more self-contained than ever, as though seeking farther and farther down in the depths of his own mind for the right answer to the great question. It all seems simple now; but there were moments in that long campaign when great decisions had to be taken—moments when a single fault or slip might have imperilled the success of the campaign and the safety of the army. I remember a message coming at an anxious moment from far, far away, giving a round dozen good, adequate, and closely argued reasons why K. should not attack the enemy: yet he attacked and beat the enemy—annihilated him, in fact—with that message in his pocket. Remember that we were 1500 miles from our base, with only some 500 men holding the line of communications, and with all the tribes eagerly expecting a reverse, and determined to make it a disaster. Others may forget, or may never have understood; but for the man responsible such moments can never be forgotten, for they burn too deeply down into the soul. Once the decision taken, K. became a different being, and the heavy frown relaxed. The thing was more than decided—it was done; and he watched the consummation with quiet, easy confidence, more in the guise of an interested spectator watching a new play than in that of the impresario all of a tremor between hopes and fears.

K.'s state of mind on the

eve of a battle was indeed not the least like that of most generals. I think he looked on a battle as a necessary but exceedingly vulgar and noisy brawl, and that the intellectual part of him always regretted when he could not strangle or starve the enemy out without a crude appeal to brute force. If he could have been induced to issue an order for the battle, it would have read somewhat as follows if it had come from his heart: "Here you are, O troops! and there is your enemy. I have clothed you, fed you, cared for you, placed you in the most advantageous tactical and strategical position possible, so now please go and fight it out, and let me know when it is all over."

He knew his fighting generals and trusted them, and his trust was never misplaced; and if he is not the hawk-eyed battle-chief that Wellington was, he is this much the more, that he places his own men in positions where they cannot lose, and the enemy in positions where they cannot win. Can any one ask for more?

No man surely ever more hated parade, show, and theatrical effect, or less courted popularity. He never spoke to a private soldier and never looked at him: there will be no *Bulletins de la Grande Armée* in the records of his career, for he has neither the gift nor the inclination to make those subtle appeals to our incomparable fighting men which touch their heart and win their confidence, and in this respect he ap-

proaches nearer to the type of Wellington than to any other. After our battalions had rushed through the der-
vish lines at the Atbara, Kitchener chanced to ride up and meet the British columns reforming. Seldom indeed can conqueror have had a prouder moment, for he was received with such a roar of maddened applause as I have never heard before or since, and perhaps none of us will ever hear again, for that class of fighting is pretty well ended for every one this side of the grave. K. was pleased, but happy he was not: he would rather have been anywhere else at that moment, and I had to implore him, at the urgent request of one of our colonels, to come and say a few words to the men,—words inaudible because drowned in a fresh outburst of frenzied cheering. Another amusing instance of K.'s hatred of theatrical effect occurred at the close of this same fight. There was a deadly feud of long standing between K.'s and Hunter's native standard-bearers. K.'s flag, like all his turnout, was new and clean, and quite untouched by battle or breeze: Hunter's flag, on the other hand, bore the honourable scars of long service and hard fighting, and had become a very tatterdemalion of a flag—all rags and remnants. The life of K.'s standard-bearer was no doubt made a burden to him by invidious comparisons, and he only bided his time to cry quits. So it befell that after the fight I happened to glance back at

the flag, and was surprised to see it apparently shot through and through, torn, battered, and hanging in rags as though it had been hurled, like the heart of the Bruce, into the thickest of the fight. I pointed it out to K., who only smiled grimly and ordered a new one!

The Atbara was a stiff fight, and rather a dangerous fight to boot, for at one moment everybody who held a rifle, friend and foe alike, was firing towards every point of the compass. Into that hell K. rode almost alone and quite unarmed, holding up his hand to stop the firing, and offering pardon to the still living remnant of the vanquished, who rushed out from trench and hut to throw themselves and their arms at his feet, as though recognising the master spirit, and seeking safety under his shadow. Yet there were some who did not hesitate to accuse him afterwards of every crime against humanity, and I recall that scene and wonder at the little wisdom and less justice of his worthless detractors.

Later on, as we rode through the *dem*, Lord E. Cecil joined us, and presently K. pulled up among the charred corpses on the burning ground to make some inquiries. Cecil made a grimace and pointed to the ground: it was strewn with dervish shells lying about under our horses' hoofs and the hoofs of the chief's horse, with the grass on fire all round them. Neither of us spoke, but Kismet, destiny, or whatever it is that sits behind the crupper, impelled K. to move on, and a few minutes

later a column of smoke shot up into the air,—the shells had exploded. But K. had passed on, for his hour had not struck,—destiny had need of him still.

When the fighting folk had had their say the looters had a merry time, and many a battle relic that now hangs in hall and cottage was garnered by those anxious for a memento of the day. K. was dictating his despatch to the Queen when there passed in front of us a pony led by a syce, and laden with spoils selected from that field of plenty with the praiseworthy discrimination of an art connoisseur. K. hailed the man, and selecting the finest coat of mail and the most beautifully finished spear, bade me take it to General Gatacre with his warmest thanks for the splendid gallantry and good judgment with which he had led his fine brigade. I seem to see now the pleasant light that shone in that brave soldier's eyes as I gave him the message word for word. Gatacre! What a splendid fellow, and how willingly any of us, whom he worked to death in the Sudan, would have given our right hands to save him from the fate that befell him—at the hands of his own chiefs—in South Africa. He taught us, in Chitral, the Sudan, and South Africa, two great lessons: first, never to make difficulties; secondly, never to complain of any hard knocks of fate, and to take the rough and the smooth things of life as they came. Oh, you poor deluded British public, will you never distin-

guish between the men and the dummies?

It is quite unnecessary to say that throughout a campaign Kitchener was absorbed in his work, to the entire and complete exclusion of every other matter. It would be presumptuous to say that he had no other interests, but there were at least none that appeared on the surface: neither sport, literature, politics, nor art, still less the idle frivolities of society, interested him at all, and I can only recall a single incident which concerns a half or more of the human race, namely, the feminine portion of it. Once, just once, the eternal feminine entered into his strategical plans and influenced them in a curious manner. When Mahmud marched to the Atbara Kitchener raised his camp and placed himself between Mahmud and the Nile, settled himself down twenty miles from his foe, and waited. No matter which line of advance the dervishes selected they were bound to be met, bound to be fought. But to most of us the one consuming dread through all these long days of waiting was that Mahmud should escape, up the Atbara or back across the desert the way he had come, for both roads were absolutely open to him. At last I mentioned our fears to the chief. "They dare not go back without fighting now," he said; "they dare not: they would never be able to face their women." It was perfectly true and perfectly just.

Every one knows from countless sketches and photographs K.'s personality campaigning:

the long, lithe, active figure, with back as straight as a dart, the almost dandified finish of the uniform, and the workmanlike character of the equipment—every inch a soldier and a leader of men. But one hardly recognises the K. one knows so well when he assumes the conventional disguises of mufti: it is quite a different being, and there is nothing in consonance with the man. Kitchener is a good rider, sitting his mount with easy grace and the lightest of hands, born of long habit and long hours in the saddle. Always well mounted, he travels far and fast, and at the end of the longest day his horse was never distressed, sure sign of sympathy between horse and rider.

I have ventured to remark that K.'s forte was not infantry drill, and this little deficiency nearly landed us in a nasty place at Omdurman. After the watering-hose part of the battle, when the Khalifa's first grand attack had been beaten off, we were ordered to advance in échelon of brigades from our left upon the dervish capital. I was at that moment with Lyttelton's Brigade, and this order gave us the first place in the advance, much to the disgust of poor Wauchope's Brigade, for we were as jealous of each other as two old tomcats. Now, a movement in échelon is never easy, even on a peace parade, for a small unit; and with any force, large or small, it can only be carried out properly if the distance to be maintained between the units

is named. No distance being given, the natural consequence followed. The brigade behind us would not give way an inch, and instead of remaining a good way off in our right rear, began treading on our heels as a protest against not being in front. This threw out the whole formation. Maxwell and Lewis in rear became disjoined, while Macdonald, moving out into the desert to take his proper place, was not only isolated, but surrounded and nearly overwhelmed. How coolly he fought on and how cleverly he extricated himself is a matter of history.

On the other hand, Kitchener has never had sufficient justice done him for his decision to march into Omdurman, when the town was full of fighting men, the day more than half spent, and no reconnaissance possible owing to the mirage. It was a very serious and a very bold decision, and K., in taking it, understood the character of the enemy better than any one else. Had he delayed for twenty-four hours, we should probably have encountered a serious resistance, and have had to fight our way from house to house and wall to wall,—fighting that should always be avoided at almost any cost, since it invariably leads not only to heavy loss but to loss of the best men.

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast than between Kitchener in the saddle, with work still remaining to be done, and the same man, his task completed,

standing under the shadow of the great tree on the river-front before Gordon's ruined palace on the 4th September. He was softened, gentle, almost affectionate to all; and those—there were many—who had often misjudged and misunderstood him, must at last have realised that down—deep, deep down—in that often forbidding and always stern and self-reliant nature, there was a soft spot and a human sympathy, a something which throbbed, and felt, and suffered, and rejoiced, in reasonable resemblance to the ordinary heart of an ordinary man.

A great Imperial asset? Yes, that is the truth; but, *pace* Lord Rosebery, we must not grudge Kitchener those few years of India which have always been the object of his ambition and his hope, for no soldier unacquainted with the needs of our great dependency can enter the War Office equipped with the necessary intellectual baggage for directing the armed forces of Britain and her dominions over-seas. But if and when he returns, it will be of the first and last importance for the public to secure for him not place but *power*: power to deal with the great problems of Imperial defence which still await the decision of the master mind; power to drain the slough of despond of the most inefficient and spendthrift of our great offices; power, absolute power, over not one but all the tools he desires to employ.

This power and the necessary scope and independence will not be secured by his appointment

as Secretary of State, and still less by his nomination as Commander-in-Chief. In the first case he becomes a prey to party, will be bandied about with the flotsam and jetsam of politics, and must necessarily stand or fall by one or other party in the State. In the second case he becomes a mere figurehead, sacrificing the utilitarian to the decorative, his time engaged in a thousand and one duties of show and parade, in reviewing troops, presenting colours, opening bazaars, inspecting garrisons, inculcating temperance, receiving royalties, not to mention those enervating visits to the Dukeries, and the endless round of so-called social "duties" which, taken all together, make it impossible even for an Admirable Crichton to fix his attention upon the really vital business which the nation desires and expects him to perform.

There is one post to which Kitchener is suited, and which is suited to him—namely, that of Chief of the Staff, carrying with it, call it by what name you will, *the sole, solitary, and exclusive duty of preparation for war.*

If Kitchener is intrusted with this task, and this task alone, aided by a good plain man of business, neither a "genius" nor a talker, as Secretary of State, and granted powers to make his views known to the public on all large questions of high military policy and to make them prevail, then I feel confident that in a few years our military position

will be made as secure as it is now insecure, and that all those parasites which now clog our administration will be shorn from it, like leaves from the trees by a November gale, and that efficiency and economy will for the first time in our history become the watchword of a new departure and of a new model army.

History, coldly reviewing the past by the light of many data inaccessible to the present, can alone give a fair and a just verdict on the life and deeds of a man; for contemporaries, the absence of perspective, the many *lacunæ* in the links of the chain of circumstance, are a necessary bar to perfect discrimination and finite judgment.

There are statesmen, there are orators, there are no doubt divines in plenty with higher faculties of analysis and exposition than those possessed by Kitchener; but these talents are not necessarily, or even mainly, the mark of the highest gifts, or the infallible measure and test of greatness.

Kitchener's strength lies in his power to create—surely the supremest and grandest faculty of Nature herself; and nothing that I can name is more striking and more impressive in his character than his power to combine and organise material, no matter how rough and unsuitable, into a new, harmonious, and definite shape. His success from first to last is due to this power, a power he possesses in a higher degree and more concrete form than any other servant of the modern State.

THE AGE OF RUIN.

(MR LANG'S HISTORY OF SCOTLAND, VOL. II.)

THE writing of history becomes ever a more ponderous task as the world grows older and the narrative of its doings lengthens out. The rise and fall of successive dynasties; the shifting balance of power; the crimes and virtues of statesmen; the waging of wars and sealing of treaties; the accumulation of material knowledge, so strangely in contrast with the permanence of unwisdom,—all these remain to this day, as they have been since man first attempted to put his doings on record, the chief material with which the historian of the past has to perform his office. True, that many sources of information have lately been opened to him. The archives of our own country and many other European Powers have been thrown wide; national records and official correspondence of past centuries have been printed, and year by year pour from the press in such abundance as might stagger the most resolute student, enabling him to throw fresh light upon obscure motives and to wrest here and there a grain of truth from among conflicting chronicles. Yet what a jejune—often deceptive—view the reader must obtain of the national life at any period which is not illustrated by copious and familiar correspondence between private persons—say, at any period previous to the last quarter of

the seventeenth century—unless he is constantly reminded that behind and around the chief actors, whose doings loom so large on every page, there was ever a mute, unrecorded multitude, of whose vicissitudes and aspirations, scan he never so narrowly, only fleeting glimpses can be had.

To no period of Scottish annals does this reflection apply more shrewdly than to that dealt with by Mr Lang in the second volume of his '*History of Scotland*'—from the murder of Cardinal Beaton in 1546 to the death of James VI. and I. in 1625. Learning had spread and deepened, it is true, for the waves of the Renaissance had cast some of its flotsam upon our northern shores; it had become the rule, as it had formerly been the exception, for persons of quality to be able to write more than a crabbed signature to documents which they were unable to decipher; but, on the other hand, the break-up of the religious houses had put an end to the patient chronicles which it had been the pride of the clergy, regular and secular, to compile. These chronicles, credulous as they are, and in parts incredible under modern criticism, remain of inestimable value to the historian, inasmuch as, written by men either of humble birth themselves, or whose professional duties

brought them into frequent contact with farmers as well as with feudal lords—with tradesmen and peasants as well as with soldiers and politicians—they abound with traits and incidents illustrating the daily life and growth of the community. This source of understanding having been dried up, one turns in vain for similar illumination to the publications of the reformed clergy: the intensity of ecclesiastical controversy dominates all other matters; rant echoes from end to end of the land, and the impression is received that the chief object of every man's energy was to prove that his neighbour must be damned inevitably and eternally. 'The First Blast against the Monstrous Regiment of Women' is sorry reading compared with Barbour's 'Brus,' and Buchanan's 'Detection' is so saturated with sectarian and partisan venom as to make one sigh for the Friar of Lanercost's honest denunciation of the Scots, for Wyntoun's entertaining jingle, and the quaint and all too brief Auchinleck chronicle. About the commonalty—farmers, merchants, peasantry, and smaller gentry—sixteenth-century writers afford little information, except in so far as they were involved in the political schemes and private feuds of their more powerful neighbours. There is scarcely anything about the people, and much about the grandees; nevertheless, behind these prominent figures, generally sinister and often enigmatical as they were, there moved the sober

mass of plain Scots folk, intent upon their several industries, and practising, it may be supposed, such virtues as faith, patience, charity, domestic affection, and continence, whereof so mighty little remains in evidence among those who were termed their betters. Of all this Mr Lang is careful to keep his readers in mind. He is an excellent antiquary, and one cannot but be grateful for the effort he has made to draw aside the veil which hangs so closely over the everyday life of the people. With this—plots, however dangerous, and intrigues, however ingenious, did not interfere so long as they were brewing. To study the secret correspondence of the wirepullers inclines one to think that there can have been no room in the land for honest industry or innocent amusement. But it is certain there was time and room for both: the provoking thing is, that one is withheld from witnessing them. Not by Mr Lang—*s'entend*: he does his best for us; more than any writer has done since Cosmo Innes. He explains, for instance, that golf-balls in King James's reign must have been made of wood, because Lord Caithness describes the cannonballs used in the siege of Kirkwall as "breaking in two like golf-balls," which is not the behaviour of leather balls stuffed with feathers, such as our grand-sires did use. Mr Lang might have added, in proof of the hardness of sixteenth-century balls, that it is recorded of the Laird of Bargany, who died in 1597, that "his neise was laich

[flat] be ane straik of ane goiff-ball on the hills of Air in reklessness [unintentionally]."¹

Yet is precise knowledge of the material of golf-balls at the time of the Scottish Reformation of subordinate interest to other things which we would fain learn and may not. In sooth, it is something to know that people found time for any recreation so innocent as golf; because, just as Mr Lang's political chapters are one long narrative of violence, treason, and civil war, so when we look to his chapter on "Social Conditions" for information upon affairs of parochial interest, he has little to tell, except of petty feuds between neighbouring lairds, and even between ministers of the Gospel, running the usual weary course of raiding, houghing of cattle, destruction of crops, slaying of men, and dragging of women about by the hair.

The best insight into the social habits of the commonalty is afforded in the proceedings of the new Kirk authorities, whereof a man may read his fill in the Session Records of St Andrews and elsewhere. Every observance of feast-days, however furtive and innocent—every lingering rag of Popery, however unobtrusive—must be stamped out by ruthless and inquisitive discipline. "Keeping great Yules," piping and dancing on Trinity Sunday,

walking in the streets or the fields "in tyme of sermone," were lawless practices hard to be quenched; for Scotsmen, ever of Conservative habits, exchanged unwillingly the brightness and lightness of their ancient faith for the sour austerity of the new. It took more than the space of a generation, wincing under perpetual reproof and punishment, to impart to the people that "dourness" and excessive gravity which was to become such a notable feature in Scottish life and character. Once the change had been brought about, it was evident that it had come to stay. Business habits prevailed against the thunders of the pulpit to retain the Popish nomenclature of Candlemas and Lammas, Whitsunday and Martinmas; but Christmas and Yuletide not only were erased from the Scottish calendar, but ceased to have the faintest significance north of Tweed. It is only of very late years that a reaction has set in among the people, so much so that it behoves those nowadays who bestow care upon plantations and pleasure-grounds to be prepared against depredation upon their hollies and other evergreens for Christmas decoration.

"There were," concludes Mr Lang, after exhausting all the evidence at his command upon the general social condition of

¹ *Historie of the Kennedyis*, p. 17. This delicious chronicle, edited by Robert Pitcairn for the Bannatyne Club in 1830, is a striking exception to the general dreariness of literature in King James's reign. It abounds in vivid sketches of rural life, as indeed it well may, seeing that there is internal evidence to show that it was written by the murderer, Mure of Auchendrain, who employed schoolboys and peasants in the perpetration of his crimes.

the country, — “there were doubtless many gentlemen like Godscroft, humane, learned, and gentle; but they do not often appear among the political leaders or the infamous secondary characters of the political drama. Of the Archibald Douglasses, John Colvilles, and Logans — of the spies, traitors, and high-handed ruffians—we know much; but little of those who, in an age of perfidy and violence, were eminent for benevolence and virtue.”

And thus, for lack of more edifying memoirs, we have to follow the course of events as it is displayed in the careers of leaders in Church and State, or communicated in letters by the Ministers and spies of Elizabeth and Cecil.

Among all the sordid, insincere, self-seeking figures that sway to and fro upon the crowded stage, only the Reformed clergy stand out free from suspicion of corruption. Narrow, uncharitable, tyrannical, odiously tactless as they were, unscrupulous, too, in argument, and in statement not invariably observant of the plain limits of fact (Mr Lang says drily, and proves it, that it is necessary to be watchful in accepting Knox's anecdotes) — yet they could not be bought, affording, in this respect, a remarkable contrast to many eminent laymen. For so much let them have full credit, for indeed their record cannot afford to shed any of its legitimate lustre. In 1580 the shadow of the scaffold was already moving upon the Regent Morton. Esmé Stuart

d'Aubigny, cousin of the murdered Darnley, had become prime favourite with young King James, who hated Morton; he had been created Earl of Lennox and received great breadths from the lands of the forfeited Hamiltons. Lennox was a papist, which grievously handicapped him in winning the favour of the Kirk; but the arguments of his youthful master — then of the mature age of thirteen — had wrought so powerfully upon his conscience that he let it be known that he was open to conviction. He suffered James to take him to hear interminable sermons, and waded through dreary tomes of controversy which the young Solomon provided for his edification. The “true professors” — preachers of the only sound Gospel — who had been painfully scandalised by Morton's private profligacy, and had been seriously weighing the problem submitted to them in an anonymous manifesto posted under cloud of night on Edinburgh cross — namely, whether Morton “had ever, or yet hath, any regard to the glory of God” — the professors, I say, had been greatly drawn towards the accomplished and smooth-spoken Lennox. Many of them thought they beheld in him the true pillar of the Kirk, for his conversion seemed merely a matter of decorous deliberation. This was not at all to Queen Elizabeth's mind, for she trusted Morton, and had no atom of faith in his rival; wherefore she sent the diplomatic Bowes on a secret mission to bribe

the lords and corrupt the ministers against Lennox.

"Bowes on his arrival found that one class of men were not venal—the ministers. A single 'reader' in James's household took a present, the tutor, Mr Peter Young, and the rest refused money. This is a crucial proof that the Reformation, which only added hypocrisy to the vices of the nobles, was really 'working for righteousness.' Of yore one man, Buccleuch, had spurned with curses the offers of Henry VIII.; now the real leaders of the people, the preachers, were of like mind."

Mr Lang terms the era of the new religion the Age of Ruin. Perhaps the "subconscious bias," for which he makes apology in his preface, has led him rather to dwell resentfully upon the wreck of fair buildings and sculpture, the priceless manuscripts and costly vestments committed to the flames and the general rejection of all grace and comeliness, which gave the Reformation a more savage stamp than it received in other lands, than upon the perilous Continental entanglement from which it delivered Scotland, and the powerful intellectual stimulus it applied to her people. Mr Lang attributes the wholesale wreckage and desolation of sacred buildings as revolutionary, rather than religious, in their motive, arising out of "the attempt to overawe justice by tumultuous assemblages." We hold a contrary view, believing that the evidence points to general indifference on the part of the masses to political reform, but to their singular susceptibility to religious emotion. It is true that Knox deprecated the destruction of the fabric of

churches, but not with a hundredth part of the fervour with which he denounced the "monuments of idolatry" which they contained. Congregations heated by inflammatory discourses against the Scarlet Woman were scarcely in the attitude of mind to distinguish nicely between the carvings and images and the structure which they adorned.

"Consequently, when the sermon of May 11 (1559), at Perth, 'was vehement against idolatry,' the inevitable consequences followed. After the sermon a priest did his duty, and performed mass, opening 'a glorious tabernacle that stood on the high altar.' 'A young boy' cried out that this was intolerable. The priest struck him, and the boy, like Smollett in youth, 'had a stane in his pouch.' He threw it, and struck the tabernacle. The whole multitude destroyed the works of art, and while the gentry and 'the earnest professors' were at dinner the rascal multitude sacked the Franciscan monastery. . . . Of the religious houses only the walls were left standing."

Such was the first act in the desolation of Scotland. Mr Lang is of opinion that "the Huguenots at Orleans, the French in 1793, were equally, or even more, destructive to buildings, books, and works of art than the Reformers in Scotland." We are unable to agree with him.

The mischief wrought by the Huguenots was local, and it was soon checked; the fury of the French revolutionaries wrought greater ruin and wider spread, but the nation soon came to its senses. France still possesses more beautiful churches than any other country. In some districts—Touraine, for instance

—nearly every village contains one, sometimes two or three, any one of which would suffice for the reputation of a whole Scottish county. What has rendered the disaster of Scotland irremediable, and makes every intelligent Scotsman blush for the stupid fervour of his countrymen in ill-doing, is that the ruin was not wrought in momentary passion, to be repaired when judgment regained its balance. The edict for the destruction of monuments of idolatry, issued in 1559, was diligently enforced for at least a century. In 1642 the General Assembly became aware that there had been permitted to remain un-mutilated on the shores of Solway a notable monument of idolatry, to wit, the Ruthwell Cross. Seventeen feet high, slender, richly carved upon all its sides, and bearing inscriptions in Runic and Roman characters, this survival of Popery actually had continued to rear its head within the very parish kirk of Ruthwell. This were enough, surely, to attract the wrath of Heaven upon the whole district in some peculiarly aggravating and expensive form—murrain among cattle, blight upon crops, or what not. The immediate destruction of the cross was decreed: down it went; its shapely shaft and nimbed head were shattered with sledge-hammers. Happily, the fragments were suffered to remain within the kirk whereof it had so long been the glory. One hundred and thirty years later Pennant beheld and noted them as he

passed that way in 1772. Even that measure of protection was refused them a few years later, when they were cast out into the kirk-yard. It was by the merest chance that they did not meet the fate of scores of similar works of art. Dr Duncan, the founder of savings banks, happened to be minister of Ruthwell in the early years of last century. With reverent hands he pieced together the desecrated cross, and set it up in his garden, thereby preserving it, first as the stumbling-block, latterly as the pride and joy, of antiquaries near and far.

It was the Age of Religious Controversy.

Above all others. Not exclusively, of course; for the human intellect is ever prone to fix on the unknowable—the undemonstrable—as the most inexhaustible theme for dispute. Grammarians belaboured each other in most truculent fashion for a couple of hundred years or so after the revival of learning; but that sport was spoilt by the tyranny of reason. In theological controversy reason may bear no part, so here we are bravely carrying forward into the twentieth century the venerable squabbles about *chimæra bombinans in vacuo*, Cowper-Temple clauses, and the like. Neither was it the first time that Scotland had been rent by ecclesiastical discussion. Bishop Columba succeeded in raising a pretty pother upon the point whether it was necessary for eternal salvation that the sacra-

ments should be dispensed by a priest shaven on the crown or on the temples. But never in any previous or subsequent age has the general community launched itself with such ardour and dialectic vehemence into the discussion of how the Creator preferred to be adored. Note that at this period—at the beginning of it, at least—violent language in public was the monopoly of the Protestants. The Holy See no longer fulminated horrible execrations against Scottish heretics. It was the policy of the queen regent, Mary of Guise, to conciliate them; Archbishop Hamilton, sincere enough, probably, in desiring to reform the scandalous lives of the clergy, drew up his Catechism in 1552, "full of a spirit of gentleness and charity." Gentleness and charity were no weapons for the godly. With indescribable gusto and perseverance they plied their Catholic opponents with the inquiry, "Ye serpents! ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The only wonder is that, when they got the upper hand, the Protestants did not follow the lead that had been set to them by the Popish clergy, who had tried to stifle argument by burning the heretic. John Knox, indeed, deemed death the fitting penalty for all theology that did not accord with his own. That was the doom which he and the rest of the "earnest professors" promulgated in Perth in 1599 against priests who should persist in doing

the mass. "We require," said they, "nothing but liberty of conscience." People who, by exercise of that liberty, came to a different conclusion were to die. Probably with most of the leading Reformers this was but a pious opinion—a counsel of perfection. Besides, to enforce it would have been to put an end to that which they revelled in—theological contention. Anyhow, Mr Lang is justified in recording that "Persecutors as they were, the Presbyterians did not *burn*, and scarcely ever executed, either Catholics or Unitarians as such."

It may seem idle to speculate whether, had the other party got the upper hand, there would have been a Scottish night of St Bartholomew. Throckmorton, writing from Paris to his own Government in 1562, certainly indicated that Scotland was comprised in a universal Popish scheme for the extermination of heretics; but of this design no real evidence has come to light. Perhaps the French performance ten years later owed its success to more complete organisation than could ever be had in the northern land, where nearly everybody of any standing was always ready to give away anybody else—for a consideration.

The martyrdom of Adam Wallace, a man of unblemished life (1542), and that of Walter Milne, an aged and harmless priest (1558), deeply stirred the popular sympathy, and proved chief agents in the Protestant propaganda. It was not the cruelty of these proceedings that offended the public sense: kindly Scots were about to prove, in

the matter of witch-burning, that they could be as heartless as other nations. It was the black injustice of the doom. As a mere matter of policy, the Church of Rome never erred so fatally as in these executions. In other respects her clergy bore themselves in a far more dignified and conciliatory manner than "the preachers." Archbishop Hamilton, even he who sent poor old Milne to the stake, was blamed by the more active Catholics for slackness in dealing with heretics. Milne was offered as a sop to appease the appetite of the Church, probably much against Hamilton's inclination. He would have roused less indignation by flying at nobler quarry. The aged Earl of Argyll was openly setting the law at defiance by entertaining a Protestant preacher. The populace might have been indifferent to the fate of a grandee, for such always had at least as many enemies as friends. Hamilton satisfied his official conscience by conducting a windy, but courteous, correspondence with the earl.

But for these cowardly burnings of feeble and humble victims, the people might have been slow to respond to the call to controversy. Many of them—probably the majority on both sides—must have echoed the sentiment of Ninian Winzet, the Popish schoolmaster of Linlithgow, who in 1562, after a wordy controversy with John Knox himself, sighed, "How happy a thing it were if every man might live according to his vocation at ane tranquillity in godliness." More than a century of strife and suffering

lay between the people of Scotland and the realisation of this modest aspiration.

It was the Age of Cruelty.

The criminal code of Scotland had always been singularly mild compared with the codes of other countries. A thief was sent to the gallows only if he was "notour." The Scottish forest laws never had any of the fantastic ferocity of those of England and France. William the Lion, keen sportsman as he was, even showed consideration towards poachers, enacting that if one of the king's foresters found a stranger in the forest, he should set him on "the nearest common way, and there sall suffer him to passe away without anie trouble"; but if the forester found "ane knawin man"—a notorious poacher—he was to take from him, *before witnesses*, his "vpmaist claith" and all the money on his person, and the trespasser was to be detained during the king's pleasure. Such a thing as mutilation of prisoners was unheard of, and the extraction of evidence under torture, if not unknown in the practice of barons practising hereditary jurisdiction, at least was not recognised as part of the regular proceedings of the judiciary courts. But with the Reformation a damnable change manifested itself in the spirit of all classes. Mr Lang does not connect these two phenomena as cause and effect; he merely comments on, "after the Reformation, the increased employment of torture to extract evidence." Probably it was only the result upon legal

minds of the prevailing atmosphere of anarchy and violence. If possible, even more shameful and cowardly than the torture of witnesses was the fury which broke out against witches, simultaneously with the downfall of the old religion. Its coincidence with the Reformation is made more striking by comparison with its rise in England. Seven years after the English Reformation, witchcraft, hitherto an indictable offence at common law, was constituted a felony (33 Henry VIII., c. 8, 1541). "In Scotland," says Mr Lang, "not much is heard of punishment for witchcraft before the Reformation, when Knox, the preachers, and the Regent Murray conceived it to be their duty to denounce and burn witches." Is he right in mentioning Murray (or Moray, as we prefer to write the earldom conferred on Mary's half-brother) as responsible for setting the persecution afoot? It was in 1563, four years before Queen Mary's forced abdication, that the Scottish Parliament, at the instance of the Protestant clergy, constituted witchcraft a capital offence. It was the proceedings under this, the principal Act, ratified and confirmed in 1649, which turned the Judiciary Records into a sickening calendar of infamy. Pitcairn's 'Criminal Trials' reek with the horror of it. Nameless torments were devised to circumvent the protection against ordinary suffering which the devil was alleged, and no doubt believed, to extend to his children. It is hard to say which are most revolting—the details

of the prolonged misery of victims, or the fantastic confessions which they prevailed to extort from creatures in the last extremity of anguish. Then, after pincers had riven away the finger-nails one by one; when the cruel cord had compressed the temples to the bursting point; when the iron boots had reduced the legs to a quivering mass of blood and marrow, —when this ordeal had been renewed at intervals for weeks on end, and the lips just sufficed to murmur the damning admission, —the purpose of the tribunal was achieved: the prisoner, still sentient, though almost bereft of human semblance, was hurried off to the merciful stake.

No casuistry can acquit the Reformed clergy of being the chief agents in this shameful work; but they found in King James an illustrious competitor in brutality. Physically a coward, his eagerness to stamp out sorcery is intelligible enough. Believing in the sinister power of witches, he uttered a sincere Amen to the command, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." But it had been well for the kingly dignity if he had not betrayed his terror by showing his hatred of the unhappy creatures, taking "grit plesour" in attending the trials and watching the victims as they writhed under torment. Long after gentle King Jamie had gone to his account the ministers kept up the edifying pastime. On April 2, 1659, ten women were tried at Dumfries. Nine were convicted of witchcraft and sentenced to the stake. Against

the tenth the verdict was Not Proven; notwithstanding which she was banished from the parish. Eight ministers were appointed by the Presbytery to "be assisting to the brethren of Dumfries and Galloway the day of the execution" of the nine witches. Not two hundred and fifty years ago this scene, and similar ones in almost every market town of Scotland! What change has been wrought in our people that they call with indignation for the suppression of Armenian massacres and Central African brutalities? The secret of the savage persecution of old women in the sixteenth and seventeenth century is that witchcraft was firmly believed in, and dreaded as a real and present peril to the community and individuals, and that neither reason nor humanity affords any guarantee against the impulse of fear.

Lastly, it was the Age of Despair.

A precociously wise and temperate blend of Roman law, Celtic and feudal institutions, handed down from the age of the Kings of Peace, and administered on the whole without fear or favour, had given the people confidence in the Courts of Justice, and won for the Lords of Session well-merited esteem. But the savage conflict of faction had sullied the bench almost irredeemably. During the Regency, justice was no longer blind, but peered through fingers soiled with bribes. How could suitors affect any faith in suits heard before such vermin as Archibald Douglas?

True, this was but a tem-

porary eclipse. The Lords of Session restored their integrity before the century closed. In 1599, when King James became weary of his once beloved preachers, and tried to oust one of them from his share of the plunder of Arbroath, legally bestowed upon him, the pensioner brought an action of recovery. The king thought the matter would be easily arranged as he wished: he dared the judges to vote against the Lord's Anointed. But stout Sir Alexander Seton, the President, was resolute. Preacher Bruce won his suit and kept his pension. "The interesting point," adds Mr Lang, "is that the judges braved the king in defence of one of the preachers, though certain preachers had slandered them from the pulpit."

We have scant space left for consideration of Mr Lang's estimate of the principal actors on this gloomy stage. Mystery ever has irresistible attraction for him, and here is mystery upon mystery waiting unravelment. Queen Mary's raid, and the slaughter at Corrichie of the Catholic champion; the murder of Riccio, and what led to it; the murder of Darnley and who planned it; the intrigues of Spain and England; the Gowrie conspiracy,—here is a fardel of riddles for busy brains. But in the centre of the darkest enigma stands Mary Queen of Scots. The historian, his "subconscious bias" nobly kept in hand, confesses himself powerless to redeem her fame.

"It is the natural inference," he wistfully exclaims, after recapitulating the well-worn evidence of the

Casket Letters, "that Mary, like many other women, was not proof against the charms of Bothwell. . . . No man can record this opinion without regret. Charm, courage, kindness, loyalty to friends and servants—all were Mary's. But she fell; and passion overcame her, who to other hostile influences presented a heart of diamond. They who have followed her fortunes, cruel in every change, must feel, if convinced of her passion, an inextinguishable regret—a kind of vicarious remorse—a blot, as it were, on their personal honour. Not all earth's rivers flowing in one channel can wash the stain away. As in the tragedy of *Æschylus*, the heroic queen has sacrificed herself, and the noble nature that was born with her, to the love of the basest of mankind."

For our own part, we were well content that the queen's memory should be left just so. For centuries men have been peeping into every twilight recess, groping in every malodorous channel, sifting musty evidence, disentangling ambiguous phrase, collating partisan gossip. More of this will lead us nothing nearer the truth. Let each man, holding whatever opinion he list, join in Mr Lang's reverent requiem:—

"May God have more mercy than man on this predestined victim of uncounted treasons, of unnumbered wrongs,—wronges that warped, maddened, and bewildered her noble nature, but never quenched her courage—never deadened her gratitude to a servant—never shook her loyalty to a friend."

As to John Knox, Mr Lang cannot bring himself into line with the general verdict of his countrymen. So be it. There was much that was repellent in this sombre figure; much that was unduly harsh in his dealing with opponents, and narrow in his judgment of

his fellow-men. "He was the greatest force working in the direction of resistance to constituted authority—itsself usually corrupt, but sometimes better than anarchy tempered by political sermons." Yet who may withhold from this grim, masterful figure the tribute due to genius—that impalpable, indefinable *dæmon*, which, nerving one man in half a million to relentless concentration of purpose and the sacrifice of every subordinate consideration, carries him to achievement beyond the powers of the common run of mortals.

About the Regents Moray and Morton, Mr Lang is even less inclined to be indulgent than about Knox. In his eyes Moray's claim to the title of "the Good Regent" is one to move mirth among the spirits of evil. In Morton he can only allow "one virtue—personal courage, one political merit—a strong hand." One is tempted to speculate whether it is the historian's chivalry, rather than an inexorable sense of justice, that leads him to plead for Mary as a "predestined victim," while he admits no palliating circumstance in Morton's lapses from integrity. Can it be that, had the parts been changed—had it been Mary's lot to wear trunk-hose, grow a red beard, and have a clumsy nose, and Morton's to be of Mary's sex and charm, with soft brown eyes, a clear complexion, pranked out with delicate feminine finery, can it be, I say, that Mr Lang would not have weighed the Regent's actions with the same unflinch-

ing hand? It was the lot of both Moray and Morton to range themselves in a hard unfavouring light, mercilessly revealing the many flaws in their conduct, every blemish in their characters. What does not appear so clearly in the shadows of the tortuous web of diplomacy and intrigue amid which they moved, is the crucial dilemma through which they undertook successively to steer the State. Wasted by two centuries and a half of scarcely intermittent war with England, Scotland stood at the very end of her resources. Her coinage had been debased to the verge of discredit; her people were a byword for poverty throughout Europe; there was need of some extraordinary, if unscrupulous, force to preserve the national existence—let alone independence. There was need, also, of the support of some external power, for Scotland could not stand alone. Two courses only were open to her rulers—one, the renewal of the ancient league with France, involving the danger, nay, the certainty, of the re-establishment of Popery, and the confirmed hostility of England; the other, acceptance of the English alliance, at the risk, indeed, of national independence, but with the assurance of peace on the Border. The last sentence of Mr Lang's volume, although but an indifferent example of the author's grace of style, proves, at least, that he stands in no doubt of the urgency of the crisis.

"How the distracted Scotland, torn by family feuds, ungoverned, unpoliced, could ever have reached a

milder civilisation, except by way of the union of the Crowns and English influence, does not appear."

In this conclusion is contained the justification of the policy of Morton. That he carried it within practical reach of fulfilment must stand to his lasting honour as a public servant. For the rest—his hollow cant, his private profligacy, his bloodguiltiness—have they not been expiated by his tardy doom?

Attention may be drawn to the explanation offered of the conduct, hitherto so mysterious, of William Maitland of Lethington. Alternately the confidential servant and the bitter accuser of Queen Mary, he ended his life in the desperate defence of Edinburgh Castle in her cause. Mr Lang's theory is summarised as follows:—

"A few weeks ago Mary had saved his life at her own peril, placing her body between him and Bothwell's dirk, in the *ruelle* of her bedroom. And now [the day after the surrender at Carberry] Lethington was the most cruel of her captors. . . . He posed as a man reluctantly obliged to leave her cause, but most anxious to serve her if he could. Nay, he presently did try to conciliate her, but (as Randolph plainly told him in a letter of a later date) not till he had failed to induce the lords to put her to death. As she lived, and as she had proof of his guilt in Darnley's murder, he was compelled to conciliate her. We shall find that, while he showed the casket letters *privately* to the English commissioners at York (October 1568), to attain a special end, he next tried to shake the belief of Norfolk in the authenticity of the letters, and opposed their public production at Westminster. Once the letters were widely known, Lethington had shot his bolt; while hers—her proof of his guilt—was in her quiver. Thus he was forced into her service later, and died in it, unfor-

given. By this theory, previously unknown to our historians, the strangely tortuous later policy of Lethington may be explained."

One word about Kirkaldy of Grange. At first one of the Queen's most determined adversaries, he received her surrender at Carberry, and afterwards delivered the decisive charge upon the Hamiltons at Langside. Moray then made him governor of Edinburgh Castle, but in 1570 he declared for his captive Queen. What changed him we know not: partly his friend Lethington's persuasion; partly indignation at the ferocities of Sussex on the Border; chiefly, we believe, his conviction that Morton was one of Darnley's murderers. His defence of Edinburgh Castle against his former masters raised him to a very high rank among the captains of the day. We had fain that Mr Lang, in passing encomium upon Kirkaldy's gallantry and skill, had not tempered it by the cold parenthesis, "If we may trust Sir James Melville." Surely the facts speak for themselves. For nearly two years Kirkaldy bade defiance to the Regent: not till Sir William Drury's English guns had reduced his last defences to smouldering ruins, and the mutinous garrison threatened to hang their dauntless captain over the Castle rock, would he consent to capitulate. It has been said that Morton promised to spare his life. Mr Lang does not confirm this: on the contrary, he states that the Regent refused conditions. He turned a deaf ear to the prayers of Scottish gentlemen on behalf

of the first of Scottish soldiers. He could not afford to let Kirkaldy live, his chief accuser in the Darnley business. In all the deplorable history of this deplorable time, there is no more sorrowful page than that which bears the record of the felon's death for Kirkaldy.

We cannot bring to a close this notice of the volume before us without a word of warm approval of the manner in which Mr Lang is discharging a difficult task, which has tried so many hands and baffled some. Among his predecessors he names Tytler as being "beyond rivalry the most learned and impartial historian of Scotland." Mr Lang himself is going far to earn the title of the liveliest and most diligent. A gentle partisan, his partiality is too frank and transparent to mislead, and he has the gift of presenting the harvest of laborious original research without the faintest flavour of pedantry. He is not careful to show up the errors of other writers; when he does so, it is with a careless, half-playful backhander, as when he notes Mr Froude's mention of Perth, "sacred as the burial-place of the first of the Stewart kings." "But James I.," observes Mr Lang, "was not precisely the first king of his house."

One complaint we cannot suppress. Why will not historians insist upon the printers putting the year date at the head of every page? The author who causes his readers to wander back through half a chapter to find this necessary information runs some risk of transient malediction.

CHILDREN OF TEMPEST.¹

A TALE OF THE OUTER ISLES.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

CHAPTER V.—THREE ISLANDS.

OVER three islands Dermosary went to his burial, the lairs of his name being at Trinity Temple in the other Uist, now cut off from the grace of Mother Church, astray and heretic. The cart he rode in—as comfortable for a corpse as any hearse with feathers—had to cross the two fords, dreadful in November weather, for all their sandy miles are mournful with the whimpering ghosts of old tragedy. He went on a Wednesday that he might be under turf on Thursday, for Friday is the cursed day (and yet for us how blest!) on which Christ died.

Father Ludovick and his sister and a dozen of his people rode north in the face of the wind, first traversing the plains, and in the afternoon threading among the little lochs that lie unnamed and without number in Uist and Benbecula, forgotten when the Lord relented and blew back the waves from all the bens and Ararats.

Three halts they made for refreshment, and built three cairns for a memorial, and at the mouth of the evening they came to Creggans—a hamlet of the ancient monks, that sees St Kilda itself out on the deep,

with its mountains exceeding dim.

Creggans had an inn, an ugly place, two-storeyed, square and black, thatched with withered *ranach*. It stood by itself drearily in the middle of a desolate patch of sandy soil near the margin of the sea, that always looked like leaping on it and sweeping all within it through the lattice windows, leaving the tangle of the outermost deeps upon its sills and astragals. Here the mourners meant to spend the night. When they came towards it at first there was no sign of occupation, far less of hospitality: no smoke came from the chimney, no person was visible in its neighbourhood, but when the cart was stopped Father Ludovick hailed the house and the household. A pock-marked red-haired man of an aspect unpleasant and unwelcoming came hurriedly to the door and touched his cap.

“Who in the world is this that travels?” said he with a glance at the mortcloth on the cart.

“One that was a man last Monday, innkeeper,” said the priest, “and travels no more in this world: my uncle of Dermosary.”

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"Dermosary! Just so! just so! a good man; peace with him and his share of Paradise," said the innkeeper, with a buttered mouth. "I am out of the world here, and never heard a word of it. You are making for Teampuill Trianaid, Master Ludovick? Then you cannot cross till break of day, if you will not cross in the dark."

"That was in our calculations. With your will we will stay here till the morning ford is open. I daresay you can provide a room for my sister, and the rest of us who cannot make a shift with a chair at the kitchen fire can get accommodation in the houses of the neighbours."

"I will do my best," said the innkeeper, with a hesitation. "It is not every day we have a true gentleman of name as well as fortune to bury." He made to help Anna from her saddle, but she was on her feet before he could offer her a hand. At that he gave a cunning smile.

"Her ladyship is very light," said he, "for twenty thousand pounds."

Father Ludovick gripped him by the arm. "My good man," said he, "it is not the hour for wit."

"Take my excuses, Father," said the innkeeper, his pitted face as red as his hair. "It's an old tale in the isles of Uist, her ladyship's fifty-year fortune, and I meant no offence." And then he went to an outhouse where his wife, a drab, was curing dog-fish, and gave her his mind in English oaths she luckily could not understand. She looked on him with terror, trembling, as dumb as a stalled

beast. "Here's a funeral," he said to her, "from Boisdale—old Dermosary—and not a bed made. *Mollachd Dhe!* but have I not the useless slut, barren of wits and work and weans?"

Dermosary for the night slept under his mortcloth, in the barn; two men kept him company with a crusie, and played a game of cards; a few sheltered in houses in the neighbourhood, Father Ludovick and the others sat up in the kitchen of the inn, and Anna tried to sleep in a room above. But the inn of Creggans was not meant, that night, for sleep. It was for ever shaking to the wind, its carpentry creaking, its doors and chimneys abominable with continual moans. She lay staring in the darkness, and the first touch of the dawn at her window was very welcome. Up she got and said her island prayer, and looked upon a landscape she had not seen since she was a child, a landscape that many a time in France she had thronged in dreams with folks of terror or romance. Miles of sandy strait lay between her and the hills and plains of Northern Uist. Deep sea-pools were there, and rivulets of escaping tide; rocks—very black—very cruel—very cold—were scattered upon the sands, on which the sea-gull and the curlew went staggering before the wind. The light of Carinish was still shining on the other side, a wan eye for guidance to the traveller, and the tall Mount of Eaval was unseen, but already the ford was thronged. Some women with

their gowns high-kilted waded knee-deep in the pools, spearing flat-fish, others bent to seek for bait. Little ponies, saddled with rugs of pleated bent-grass and bitted with rope, with streaming tails, plashed in the morning wind at a cheerful trot across the rivulets; others stepped leisurely, long streams of them laden with panniers of peat. The day indeed was come, and it came hardly any sooner than her brother, who was not astonished that she should answer dressed and ready for departure, to his summons at her door.

"I knew it," said he. "No sleep, Anna? I could not sleep myself for the certainty of it, and there's an innkeeper here has talked about what he calls 'life,'—his blackguard life of the barracks and the sea, of wars, and smuggling ships, and blacker crafts I'm thinking, though he dare not mention them to the priest,—till I could have gone into a trance had I not the knowledge—a constant pain over my eyebrows—that you were lying, *m' eudail!* staring in the dark and hungry for daylight."

"I am so glad the day has come," said Anna, looking about the room that had for so many hours seemed dreadful to her wakefulness, and they went to the poor slattern's notion of breakfast. They were in the midst of it when Father Ludovick took a thought and cried upon the innkeeper.

"You have not seen any sign," said he, "of a friend of mine from Corodale?"

"Corodale," said the inn-

keeper, and showing a slight confusion,—"Col, or Master Duncan?"

"Either," answered Father Ludovick. "I sent a message asking them to the funeral, and hoped to meet one or other of them at the south ford or here. But the bidding was something of a piper's, as we say, and it is unlikely that any of them would come all the way from the other side of Uist in such weather."

"Weather, Master Ludovick, is a thing that never troubled one of them in Corodale: there is something in the race of them that they would sooner have the blash of rain in their necks than a sun-burning."

Anna could not but smile at her brother, for here was his commonest sentiment—a preference for the storm, that made him often wander out upon the shore at midnight and revel in the onset and the fury of the sea.

"If he comes, then,—but I do not look for him now,—he will have counted on the open ford, and will be here presently," said Father Ludovick, and the innkeeper went out to make inquiries.

"I was not aware you had specially invited Corodale," said Anna when they were alone.

"I did so at the last moment," said her brother, "and on a curious impulse, for it was our droll friend, Dark John, hinted at the compliment, and offered himself to travel with my message. I thought if one brother could not come, we might be honoured by the other."

"Dark John—poor fellow! it will be long before he forgets his thankfulness. Since Michaelmas Day he has been constantly praising Young Corodale to me. Many a time I have blamed myself that I did not that day see the man who risked his life to save a few more years for John. What is he like, this Col?"

"Like? Oh, just like the world, my dear, that we luckily never see the inside of until we die: pleasant enough to look at, and reputed of many accomplishments. It may be no more than the scandal of Uist, but he has the name of trafficking in contraband between Barra and the mainland,—a wretched enterprise surely for one that has no excuse of poverty to justify it. I have been vexed myself that I found no opportunity to talk with him when he swam ashore at Dalvoolin on St Michael's Day; it might have been lucky. I had that high impulse on me at the time I could have wrenched the soul from him."

Anna wanly smiled. "It would have been taking an unfair advantage," said she, "of a soul soaking with the brine of the Atlantic. Your human intuitions, dear Ludovick, are fortunately much better than your spiritual ones sometimes."

He sighed at that.

"Well, I no more than saw him landed, and assured myself that he and the other man were safe. As you know, I went to the tacksman's house again in the morning and found that Col was gone. He

had come over from Corodale to look for a sloop that was thought to be foundered, but has since turned up and plies her trade as wickedly as ever—so I hear—between Mingulay and Moidart. I would like to meet the man for the sake of his soul and his brother Duncan."

"The heretic!" cried Anna.

"Hush! my dear; a most unholy epithet. That a man has abandoned his intention of taking orders is no impeachment, surely, of his faith. Duncan has his own sufficient reasons, as no one will admit more readily than I, that know them best—'faith, better than himself, may be. You have never seen him, and can never know how good a heart he is—so frank, so bright, so honest."

"My dear brother! And are they the qualities that spoil him for a priest?" said Anna, smiling again. "If it is so, I wonder that some folks I know are doing not so very badly in Highland chapels."

"I have not met with him but once since he came back from France," said Father Ludovick, unheeding of her humour, "and I hoped that he, if not his brother, should be with us at the Trinity Temple."

But neither of the sons of the widow in Corodale had come to Creggans before the ford was fully open, when the funeral party set out again upon its convoy of old Dermosary to the place where his folk were sepulchred. The innkeeper stood at his door and watched them trailing behind the mortcloth to the side

of the ford, and "Fair wind to you! brethren," said he; "if there's one I cannot stand much company with, it's his reverence from Boisdale."

The cart laboured in the sand, and splashed axle-deep in the rivulets that in the north ford are never dry; behind came the mounted mourners, Anna the only woman among them. Once and again on the ford, she let her pony fall behind a little, to gaze curiously at the spectacle. This way and thus, she thought, had come many burials; this way had come fierce bands of cruel soldiers from the north, scourging the poor islands; this way had come lovers, fiery after waiting weary hours upon the cold shore of Benbecula or Uist, to meet the lady.

Her company, crossing the sand without a sound of hoof or wheel or whinny, was like a vision: as her little pony walked doulcely under its fairy burden, she half closed her eyes and sank (for she had something of her brother's habit) into the trance that sometimes came to her from rare landscapes, from unusual aspects of sea or cloud, —a trance where, in a sweet half-dream, she saw the mourners as ancient old eternal folks, travelling through time for a goal unattainable, the sport of the pagan gods, with one that was her brother, a

dreamer and a priest, leading them on a tall horse, his head, half sunk on his bosom, thinking. She saw, too, Eachkamish in the west, barring the way to the open sea, and busy with birds above it like a dust, though so far away she could not hear their screaming: Isle Grimisay rose in the sands, half-way over the ford, low and rank and dark, a sand-blown rock whence came the women spearing flat-fish in the pools. The men they passed stopped their labours, arrested their ponies, and doffed their bonnets to the pall; the women — if they were of the ancient faith — let down their garments, waded from the pools, knelt upon the sand and crossed themselves, murmuring —

"O Mary! Mother of Christ,
A soft path for the far traveller!"

"Dear people! dear people!" said Anna, passing them: they wakened her from her reverie, and she urged her pony into a sprightly dash that brought her up beside her brother.

They rode wearily through the unending sands of the Great Bay, and passed among bare-headed heretics at the Ditch of Blood, and reached the grave beside the Trinity Temple about the hour of noon. Anna looked round the company at the grave, half hoping to see the man from Corodale, but he was not there.

CHAPTER VI.—THE LOST LADY.

The last turf was hardly upon old Dermosary, and the spades were still at the smoothing of

his bed, when the storm, that had all day threatened a renewal, made its bold and un-

mistakable appearance in the west. The afternoon smelt suddenly salt ; there came a boom of the surf from Eachkamish ; wild-geese flapped, tuneless and harsh, in wedges hurriedly over Benbecula ; the skua slanted like a lance across the wind. Then it was that Father Ludovick's face clouded, though his thoughts were not upon the weather. He was one that had curious gifts, and felt the influence of the elements quickly, —felt them not in warmth or chill, but in premonitions and inward impulses that answered to the tiniest rainfall of the spring, even when he slept, and made him glad in his dreams for all the flowers, and rejoice with the thirsty mountain grasses. He had communion with the sea and wind ; could tell when they must rise and shout, or when their hour of rest was come for them—not a trivial gift of fisher-lore, but the knowledge of the smaller gods. "I am Boreas to-day, my dear !" he was used to tell his sister when she came seeking for him, with a hat and plaid, knowing him of old, and finding him all uplifted, breathing deep in hours of storm upon their island, tramping the sands of the beach, or bareheaded, with flying curls upon his temples, and an abandoned neck, standing on the farthest promontory crying Gaelic verses to the day.

"Boreas will excuse me for interrupting his business, but he must not be catching cold, and it's wise he would be to come to dinner," she would cry through the gale, laughing, and stand on tiptoe to clap his hat

upon his foolish head, his plaid upon his shoulder, then gently tug at a wet sleeve to bring him home. "Come in, Boreas, come into thy cave and use thy breath to cool thy broth ! It is good broth, for I myself made it. O king ! am not I the unhappy woman to have a brawling wind for brother ? Father Boreas, consider the poor seamen that are tacking for home, and that I am a useless doctor for quinsies, and that my humble human broth is waiting your reverence's leisure."

"It will clear in half an hour," he would tell her then, perhaps, though the sky seemed angrier than before, and he would go with her calmly, laughing, a little ashamed of his raptures, and by-and-by, as he had said, the ocean shared his impulse and was stilled.

No less was he the instrument of the dulcet hours. "To-morrow I will shine, I know it !" he would say, on a night no matter how black and menacing, and to-morrow for a certainty it would be a world of light, and he would spend the day from house to house among his people, jocular and hearty, the very sun itself, and yet—and yet at times between the dwellings, with just a little touch of sadness as he looked upon the ground and thought of all the earth's futilities. "You are the master of them all—Boreas or Sol," would Anna say on such occasions, sharing in his gaiety, for was not that, too, her nature ? but more deeply feeling in her breast the Gaelic melancholy.

"Yet on my word I am liking you best as Boreas, for storming is a brisk business that needs no meditation, and when it's shining we must be, it is so easy that it gives too much time for thoughts." It was true; he had in marshalling the stormy elements a rapture that he never found in the days of calm. And she knew why. "It is just this, Ludovick," she would tell him; "you and I are bairns of tempest, and feel that it is better to fight and die than rest and rot. For me, give me the pots and pans and something sensible to be doing."

As he stood at the grave, hearing the pat of the spades, his thoughts were with the conquering worm that crawls in the chamber of dreams and glory; and with the angels that are no nearer earth anywhere than in the Outer Isles, so that he saw nothing of the mustering clouds, and had no calculation of the weather, and yet Boreas frowned upon his face, and at a gentle touch from Anna he wakened with the full knowledge that it was time for them to make for shelter.

"A bad night, people," he said, hurrying them from the grave-yard. "It will last, this stormy weather, till the quarter moon, and to-night we must keep well together in crossing the ford. We will go by Gramisdale."

But Gramisdale or other-ways, the ford was gulping full, and they must wait its emptying. Between the isles the channel ran boisterously with waves, every fang of rock upon the strait—Grimisay Isle,

and the Grey Isle, Thin Isle, and Trialabeck, and the Islet of the Dead Women—white with the spray and spindrift. Benbecula, flat like a bannock, that they had walked from in the forenoon, was but dimly to be seen on the other side of this new-born sea. It seemed a change incredible to Anna. That the hoof-prints of her pony Gaisgeach should be for miles below that noisy sea, and that there, where the fish now sported, she had tranced and dreamed behind the mortcloth of her uncle Dermosary! Was it possible that the tide, filling this channel to the brim, would flow back to the west again before night-fall, and leave the bare dim sands as they had been before?

They were in the country of heretics, but still an isle of hospitality. Folks came out to them and proffered shelter till the ford was open, and of this kindness they availed themselves until the evening, when the ford was almost dry. The storm was worse than ever; but the priest was confident of a lull, and delayed their departure until it came, as he had said, at the utmost slack of the tide.

"Gramisdale, and in a hurry now," cried he, leading the way on his pony; and Anna, warmly wrapped in a plaid, comfortable on a Spanish saddle, kept close by his side, never afraid the least, but almost glad and eager for this new experience. They went before the wind down the Big Bay, as it might be the gullet of the sea, and at the end of it turned to the west. The

driver of the cart sheltered his head and shoulders with the mortcloth, and a man who rode beside him carried a torch that flamed noisily in the slackened wind and hissed in the rain-drops. It called about them shadows and shapes of fear, and drew to their neighbourhood, too, screaming sea-birds that might very well be ghosts; but worse than all, the flambeau brought the night about them like a wall, so that no matter how quick they rode, they had with them always the one same little bit of sandy desert.

"We would be better without the light," at last said Father Ludovick, for the second time confused by the shadows, and unable to see the rocks that are the beacons of the ford; and so the torch was stamped out in the moist sand.

The priest went on his way, with his grey eyes searching into the very deeps of the darkness, humming the native *Veni Creator*—

"Ur naimhdean fuadaich fada bhuainn,
'Us builich òirnn do shith gu buan."

The air, the sentiment, commanded him at last; his voice increased, as challenging the wind, and Anna's joined it. There were runnels to cross, rocks and pools like tiny lakes to pass round, quicksands familiar and ill-reputed—some of them with horrible stories—to evade; but these things they accomplished as in a dream. Conquered by the music was their company too, and, carried away upon the hymn, they began to separate a little.

"Keep together! keep together!" cried the priest. "I have no notion for any of us to pass the night on Trialabeck, and it is the poor best that could happen to whoever missed his way here."

He caught his sister's reins.

"I must not lose *you*, at any rate," said he.

"And am I to be the only child of the company?" she asked with a touch of spirit, gently releasing them from his grasp. "No, no, Ludovick; I can do as well as my neighbours. There is no fear that I shall lose myself."

"If you did," said he passionately, "I should wade or swim between Eachkamish and Grimsay all night long looking for you; but there must be no talk of losing you or any other. Poor girl! I'm sorry to have you out in such a night."

"I am happier here than I could be at home in your absence," said she, and fell again into the humming of the Gaelic hymn, her head bent down against a wind gaining its strength anew, some loops of her hair beating lightly on her cheek.

No lights shone that night in all Benbecula, or, if they did, the clouds concealed them. Some there were behind them if they turned to look—pale crusies, weeping through the rain in the little windows of the Protestants, and one or two in Grimsay; but they grew dimmer and dimmer, and died at last suddenly, as if puffed out at a breath.

"Keep together! keep to-

gether!" cried the priest, sure that some of his company straggled, though they were not all to be compassed even vaguely by the eye, and he wheeled his pony about to circle round them and gather in the wanderers of his flock. Anna followed, so that she might obey his behest and keep by his side. She had no sooner turned her pony's head than he was seized by longings for the shore of Northern Uist, for the hard salt turf he had come from last, for a stall where he had ease and oats and none of the sleet and rain that now began to fall. He dashed sprightly over the sands with one little snort of pleasure.

"Gaisgeach! Gaisgeach!" said Anna with reproach, struggling to stay this shameful retreat, but the pony could not be stayed till something so suddenly checked him that he almost threw her from the saddle. He flung back his head with a whimper, plunging with his forefeet as if they had been hobbled; he had come on quicksand and was sinking!

The girl was as calm as if the hour had been noon and this the highway. She dismounted hurriedly, coaxed the animal for a little in vain, then urged him free at last. He stood with his nose in her shoulder, all trembling.

"Poor Gaisgeach!" said she, soothing him, while the wind boomed over the flats and the sleet whipped her forehead. "Poor Gaisgeach! home was happier than this; but never mind, we'll be there to-morrow."

He raised his head to whinny, still trembling at the neighbourhood of his terror, and she caught him by the nostrils to prevent him, lest it should alarm her brother and call attention to her accident. The night was deathly dark; her friends were wrapped in it and no sound came from them, but yet she had no fear that she could not speedily regain her brother's side. Mounting again, she forced her pony to a canter. She rode for five minutes—nothing rose before her but the black wall of night; she rode for ten—the world seemed governed all by darkness, and tenanted wholly by sleet and the sounds of the sea, and the sands had swallowed up her company. Then she knew herself lost indeed, for she came on a group of little rocks, and beyond them a great pool that the good guidance of her brother would never have brought them near.

"Ludovick! Ludovick!" she cried, stopping her pony, and bent against the wind to listen. She got no answer. New fears came down on her—dogs of darkness and danger—she set the beast to a gallop on the sands, finding more runnels, rocks, pools, and quicks. The sleet stung on her eyelids and the wind struggled with her gown. With her growing terror there came a thought half-envious, half-despairing—of warmth in St Teresa, and Sister Agnes snug with a book beside a fire; she could have sworn she heard the chime of bells.

"Ludovick! Ludovick!" she

cried again. Only a sea-gull answered from another pool greater than the first she had encountered. Ludovick could not hear; he was far off to her right, ignorant of her absence, driving his flock before him, his face uplifted to the sleet, Boreas again, exalted in this night of hazards.

"I must trust in God and Gaisgeach," said Anna, and at guess trotting through pools, with a loose rein, on ways that appeared to lead nowhere. She seemed to herself to travel thus for hours, but always with hope—till at last, with a splash of her pony's feet, a thought struck cold at her vitals.

She was crossing many streams for this to be a falling tide!

The tide was coming in again; the ford was filling!

She had heard too many tales of disaster in this place not to know the horror of the situation. It was she that was all trembling now; her pony was indifferent. "We must hurry, Gaisgeach!" she said. "We must hurry. Dear Gaisgeach! fellow of my heart! Gaisgeach, my hero! Gaisgeach! we must hurry! May the Good Being keep us, if we are not soon out of here on this night of nights! Ludovick! Ludovick!" She cried again, shrill against the wind that tore her voice in fragments; the horse began to share her fears, and raised his head and whinnied as he did before upon the verge of the perilous quicks; she felt the sense of swooning, and gasped a prayer for heaven's assistance.

Her answer came at once in the stumble of her pony on some stones and in the odour of grass. Here was safety of some kind—if it were no better than Trialabeck that her brother had spoken of. She dismounted, led her pony over the loose stones, and reached with difficulty a summit tufted with herbage, where, all worn by her fears, she threw herself upon the ground, under a heavy overhanging reef of rock, and burst into tears.

The rain had ceased; the wind bellowed more fiercely than before, and seemed to challenge her intrusion on the haunt of gull and gannet. Many a time she cried like a soul lost in the chaos of the latter days—a poor little tender, gentle soul, and white and fragile, perched on a rock uplifted from the waters. They ran round the base of the islet now, and sent her to speculate whether she should be safe in such a night even here. The pony lay beside her, and gave her shelter. She heard the winds grow larger and larger until it seemed a world of sound; she grew more tired; she was not cold; she was not uncomfortable; she could sleep. She would have slept but that a curious sound startled her into full wakefulness and something of her native Gaelic terrors. It was the plash of footsteps as if some one waded to the rock. The sea has a thousand wonders in the Outer Isles; there still haunt the sexless and nameless things that are in olden legends, storms enticing

them from profound green beds that they may sport on sea-beach and on shallow. She stood up trembling, little left in her of all her foreign scholarship, a cry kept back upon her lips.

The plashing footsteps came near, unmistakably some one

walked in the rising tide. They reached the rock; she heard breathing, some one stood—she knew though she could not see him—on the level below her, and a man's voice cried "Anna! Anna!" over the darkness. And it was not her brother's, nor that of any one else she knew.

CHAPTER VII.—FOLLOWERS OF THE SEA.

A sloop had come in on the day before to Uskavagh on the east side of Benbecula, and her seamen walked across the island to the inn of Creggans on this afternoon. The five of them were rogues: a Maclean of Corbolst; two brothers—Macleods, incomers from Loch Vaternish in Skye; a Lowlander with a name and language beyond the knowledge of his comrades, who, when they wanted his attention, had to jog his elbow or thump him on the back; and the skipper, a man of Barra answering to the by-name of Flying Jib-boom, who had, by all accounts, the mark of the lash on his back, and wore earrings like a woman, could sing a song in a way to make folks weep for pleasure, and between the stanzas—if the need arose for it—was capable of cutting a throat. They came over the island in the spirit of boys, capering upon the way, chasing each other in childish gambols, laughing, swearing, singing choruses to the lead of Flying Jib-boom, playing tricks upon bairns in the bye-going, or jocular with women working in the mosses which they

passed. They were in the very height of merriment until they reached the inn.

Was ever an inn that was not welcome to a mariner? And yet this inn of Creggans might have been a church, so sudden their aspect changed.

They went forward to the grey gable-end of it with steps that grew slower and slower, till at last they stood together a little bit from the corner they must round to reach the entrance; and there they clustered to debate who should be the first to venture in.

"I'll take a little of the air, lads," said the skipper, beating upon his breast, "and will be after you in a moment." But the others closed about him, and refused to let him go.

"What's this of it?" said one of the Macleods. "Who should go first but the skipper himself, that has the command, and the two languages, and can take—if need be for a quirk—to the fine and convenient English?"

Flying Jib-boom was pleased at the compliment, but still reluctant. "It's not that I'm feared for the brute nor for any of his name," said he; "but

here's the whole of you shivering in your shoes because a man has a rough tongue in him, and such cowardice puts me in the nerves."

"Well, just go on, skipper; let us go round the house three times sun-wise for luck, and pop in and clap down," said the man Maclean from Corbolst, drawing his hand across his mouth. "I'm dry. He can but talk; and at that same, skipper, lad, there's few your equal on a deck."

"On a deck maybe, but this is different. Give me the soles of my feet on timber and I am the boy that can roar; but there's something weakening about the land, and I was aye too jolly when it came to inns. I cannot talk here unless I lose my temper; and how can I do that just now, I'm asking you, and me in such a jovial key?"

"O king! I'll warrant he'll give you the excuse for temper," said Macleod.

They all crowded, and pushed, and nudged, and shuffled; but still no one would lead the way, till a man in rags came running across a small field to them and cried, "Brave lads! are you looking for some one to have your morning bitters with?"

The question was so bold and strange they had to laugh.

"The very man we're seeking for," said the skipper, putting two fingers through one of the holes in the fellow's coat, as if it were the gill of a fish. "It is not till this time of the day we would be putting off our morning bitters in the month of November and in bleak Benbecula of the agues, but here's

a gallant youth will lead the way into the Sergeant's inn. Put your bare feet to it, lad, and I will pay your morning tankard."

But the native drew back. "Not a bit of me!" said he. "It's too much honour to be marching before my betters. I thought perhaps I might slip in at the hinder-end. Besides, the Sergeant——"

What more he might have said remained unspoken, for the innkeeper himself at that instant came round the gable of the house and threw them all in a confusion. He stared at them with a contempt he took no trouble to conceal—surely the most unusual attitude for a man who kept a tavern!

"God's splendour!" said he, putting his hands upon his hips, "have I not here Jib-boom the brave and his lice? Here's a corps of stout fellows fit for the gallows; there's not one I could not send there if it was in my mind to do it, and yet they'll stand shuffling at my honest door debating about who'll come in first. Gentlemen, gentlemen, don't be feared; it is not the jail of Inverness nor the confessional."

"I am in the hope that you are very well," was all that Flying Jib-boom could say, for he was not yet in a temper, and, following the innkeeper, he went within, followed in his turn by his crew, who clung together like school-children again, nudging and winking to each other, the Lowlander, who knew no word of Gaelic and could only guess the situation,

making a gesture of contempt with his palm upon his breeches.

"My trouble! there's the gallant lads now!" said the ragged man to himself, thinking on the thunder of the Sergeant's visage, and then went lothfully and took a drink of water at a neighbouring well.

Once in the house it was plain how seriously the seamen had to fear an entrance. For the Sergeant was their master and their bully. He threw some liquor on the table before them at the skipper's order as if they had been dogs, and, "What's this I'm to credit for the honour of your call to-day?" said he. "I thought I ordered you to take the sloop direct to Barra, and here you have her, I suppose, at Uskavagh."

"Well, Sergeant, I would not say but she might happen to be in Uskavagh too," confessed the skipper, hurriedly gulping his drink, as it were the last he was to have on earth. "My God!" he thought, "I must make haste and get wild. I must get the red fury on me at once, or he will have the whole advantage. That's the worst of singing and of songs, that they put a man out of the right key for business with a person like this."

"You're not denying it?" said the innkeeper, folding his arms. "There was little need for you, because I knew it. Just let me look at you." He bent with a hand on the table and looked from one to the other of the five men sitting round it. "Between here and the other end of the kingdom," said he in English, "I would

be beat to find a blacker lot of ruffians. I would say nothing about that if they could be trusted the length of a cable-tow with any business that demanded common-sense. I'm not paying high wages for handsome looks or for even-down honesty, but, God! that I cannot get my plain orders carried out the way I put them!"

"I will have no parley in English; there you have the whole advantage," said the skipper; and to himself, "The devil's in it that I cannot get an anger! It's the worst of a good humour that there's no getting over it."

"What's all this gang wanting here?" asked the innkeeper, back to his Gaelic.

"The skipper said we were to come," said a Macleod, "or on my soul you may be sure I would never have put a foot in Creggans Inn this day. There's plenty of good company about the world elsewhere."

The innkeeper paid no heed to the Skyeman; but, to the skipper, "I suppose," said he, "you could not trust them alone on the vessel? They might sell her keel for sinkers to the fishermen."

"Well, it's just this of it," said the skipper, "you would not be expecting any man to come from Uskavagh and go back in the dark again without some company."

"It's at Uskavagh you had no right to be. I said Barra, did I not? I said Barra. You know the place? You've been in it often, drunk and sober. You have ears in your head

by all appearance, and I said Barra. Take the cargo into Barra," I said, "and——"

"Yes, yes, the cargo," said the skipper, and slapped his drinking-horn upon the table. "Was I not sure there was something of small importance I forgot? We did not go to Barra, Sergeant, because—well, because there is no cargo. Is my face red, Macleod?" he asked, turning to one of the men of Skye, who said it was. "Then," went on the skipper, "there's an end to peace! I am telling you there is no cargo, Sergeant, and make the worst of it! We lost the stuff at Arisaig; but there's plenty of cheap drink among the Macdonnells of Morar, I'll warrant, since last Thursday, for the gaugers never got it any more than we did. There's news for you! You are very fine with your tongue, Sergeant, very fine, if one will listen to you in the English; but give me the Gaelic and fair play, and timber to my feet, and I could burst your ears with conversation. The cargo's lost, man. There's news for you!"

"Do you think it is, sea-pig?" said the innkeeper. "I knew very well what brought you here to-day, for I had the news from Corodale in the morning. It's the third cargo; another loss of the kind and I am a ruined man."

"And when you're ruined, Col of Corodale will not be very wealthy too, whatever," said the skipper, sitting back in his chair with a great indifference. "So you'll have good company."

"Col has nothing to do with her."

"It's a lie, Sergeant, a red lie," said the skipper; "and who would it be but Col that sent you the word from Corodale?"

The Sergeant grew grey with rage. "The first man that credits Corodale with it I will give him my knife in his neck," said he, and drew a *sgean* from his armpit with a flourish.

"Knives!" cried the Skye-men, starting up with much enjoyment, and kicking the stools away from their feet, but the skipper stopped them. "Put back that!" said he. "If I had my full fury on me I would slash his lordship here in ribbons for a pipe drone, but I am not more than just a small bit vexed."

The knives were all returned; no one more readily put back his weapon than the innkeeper, who was a good judge always of the lengths it was safe to go in quarrelling with islanders. "I have told you before, skipper," he said in English, "that Col has no more to do with our business now than his brother, and the brother's not to be vexed by hearing any such rumours as that. You hear? This loss is mine—and that's the worst of it; I would not mind having any one to share it with, but we all know the close fist of Col. Your last misfortune put an end to his patience and shut his pocket. He has had his last day at the free trade."

"I am very glad to hear it," said a new voice, breaking in

upon the company, sitting in a room dark under any circumstances, but now more dark than ever, for the evening was falling fast and the sky was blackening with storm. Duncan was standing at the door and looking in on the skipper and his company. "Hail to the house and the household!" said he, shaking the rain-drops off his hat. "I came over for Dermosary's burial, and am late by a night and day through no fault of my own, but because a witless messenger would have his own way."

The smugglers stood to their feet and went out for the sake of good manners, leaving their betters together.

"You're welcome at my door," said the Sergeant, looking anything but truthful. "It is the first time; I hope it will not be the last, and that the next occasion will be different. Master Ludovick and his sister and their folk took the morning ford, and I half looked for them back by this one, but they have likely gone south by Gramisdale,—at any rate they have not come this way. A dozen of them at least—a most genteel and notable funeral. The priest and his sister spent the night here."

"My brother Col was not, by any chance, was he, of the number?" asked Duncan.

The innkeeper jumped to his answer. "No," said he, "Col was not here, but Master Ludovick said he had looked for one or other of you."

"Ah!" said Duncan, "that's vexatious too, for though I was

late, I thought he would be here before me and make up for my absence. He left Corodale last night before the messenger came, and I fancied he might have happened to hear of the funeral otherwise. Where he can be is beyond me, for some folks on the way tell me they saw him come in this direction."

"Well, he has not reached this length, I'll assure you," said the Sergeant, taking to his English, which was the sign, as most folks knew but the man he spoke to, that he saw some need for lying. "I hope he is very well, your brother?" he went on, and moved to the door with Duncan.

"Was it ever otherwise than very well with Col?" said Duncan, answering him in English. "A stag's frame and a hind's heart; there is not, for many things, the equal of him in all the Isles. You have heard of him swimming at West Boisdale on Michaelmas and saving an old fellow's life?"

"Faith! and I did that, from the very man himself that he saved. He was here at the last market, and Col of Corodale was his first word and his last. The thing was not without its hazards, for you know the saying, 'Take its prey from the sea, and the prey will punish you.'"

"I have missed my purpose in coming here," said Duncan, paying no heed to the proverb. "But I will not be counting the journey unrewarded, seeing it has given me the assurance that my brother is—is—" He hesitated, from a considera-

tion of the innkeeper's feelings, but he might have saved himself the trouble.

"Out of the *Happy Return*," said the Sergeant, finishing his words for him. "Oh, it does not matter for me. I have a living to make some way, and folks are too particular. Your brother, Mr Duncan, was an ill man of late to get on with, and I am glad that he has taken his money elsewhere. I'm all the better pleased at it because my skipper and his men there have come to tell me they have had another misfortune and lost a cargo."

"So we heard at Corodale last night," said Duncan. "If there's any consolation in the fact, I may tell you that Col was as much put about as if the vessel was his own. It is another proof of his good heart——"

"There's one thing about it," said the innkeeper, "your brother Col has a very good-natured brother. In some respects he's on the narrow side, is Col."

"Narrow side?" said Duncan, drawing down his brows.

"Has he not faults?"

"We have all faults, Sergeant, so we should have little to say of the faults of others. 'Narrowness,' you say; what would be the wonder, seeing so much has gone wrong with him in business these few years back?"

"Oh, a gentlemanly vice I admit, sir," soothingly acknowledged the innkeeper, "but apt

to grow on one. I have always stood up for Col when people said he would sell yourself for a shilling."

"There is too much Col in our conversation, Sergeant, and I'm the last to hear his credit cried down. I'm for off to Gramisdale; perhaps I may meet Father Ludovick and his people coming back there. Good night!"

He left hurriedly, angry at the insult to his absent brother, angry with himself that this reading of Col's character should coincide somewhat with his own. But as he sped towards Gramisdale on the verge of the ford, he grew glad that his brother was at last clear of the Sergeant and the *Happy Return* and her nefarious traffic.

"Fair wind to you also," said the innkeeper, when Duncan had gone in the darkness; "I hate priests, half-baked or wholly cooked," and listened for a moment to the sound of surf booming in on Eachkamish. "By the seven stars! there's a night of it coming on," he said to himself. He looked about for sign of his ship's company, but they were gone; with their unpleasant message delivered, they had taken the opportunity given by Duncan to disappear, and they were now as gaily as before crossing the island, schoolboys, and brave, and careless, whooping in the townships, tapping at windows, play-acting wraiths and ghosts, to the terror of mid Benbecula.

CHAPTER VIII.—CRAFTY COL.

He heard the last halloo of the seamen on the verge of Ollavat Loch; it came through the gloaming, a sound so plainly telling of merriment, of hearts free from all anxieties, of a spirit so different from what the men had shown when in his presence, that he felt a touch of envy and of anger. He had followed the sea himself. He had splashed in ports; he had in his time known the satisfaction of a day on shore with no man to pay wages to, with the price of a glass—perhaps no more—to jingle in his pocket, and now he was a landsman of substance, in the slack-water of mid-age, possessed by his inn, chained to Uist by what fools considered his good fortune, and the paymaster of fools. The inn, square among the windy sands, with the salt of brine on its very lintel, that night, like many a night before, stirred up by its gloomy aspect all his old dissatisfactions. He forgot the gentleman of Corodale and the noisy careless seamen when he turned and looked at his own bleak walls. "It might as well be a tolbooth," said he aloud, staring gloomily. "A fine spot for a man who has been round the world to clap himself in at the hinder-end. It was my grumble in the barracks or at the sea that I never had a place to lay my boots; now, by God! I cannot put them down in this damned barn, but what I have a task to find them."

He went within, and his wife

made to fly before the menace of his visage, but came at his command and stood on the other side of the fire facing him.

"*An do ghluas e fhathast?*—has he stirred yet?" he asked her, looking over her head at the steep wooden steps that led to the upper floor.

"I have not heard him moving," said the woman.

"What a brock to sleep! Time he was on foot if it's Corodale for him this night," said he, and lit a candle, and went noisily up the stair into a narrow cam-ceiled room, where Col lay fast asleep in his clothes, a hand in his pocket and his mouth open. He had been there since morning, after travelling all night from the other side of the island to tell his partner of news so unwelcome it might very well have kept for twelve hours longer. The light of the candle that the Sergeant held revealed the meanness of the features, that, awake and watchful, looked so handsome. "He has the mouth of a skate," thought the Sergeant; "it is a blessing for us that there's the beard." He pushed Col till he started up and stared about him.

"It gets late," said the inn-keeper, "and there's a gale brewing; if you must be making to-night for Corodale, the sooner you start the better."

They went down the stair together without a word more till they stood at the kitchen fire. The peat-smoke, checked by the wind at the outlet,

swirled about in the rafters; the sea on Eachkamish was thundering. "Faith, 'tis time I was taking my feet for it and stepping," said Col, but made no move.

"Skate - mouth — skate thirist!" thought the innkeeper, and drew a horn of ale for stirrup-cup. Col pulled in with a chair to the table, glad that twopence was saved. "I slept, on my soul! like the kings that are under flags in Icolm-kill," said he, "and I wish I was at it again, to forget this cursed quirk of fortune on Arisaig. The third cargo in a twelvemonth! Luck like that again and I may take to the Lowlands roads for it with a blue gown and a beggar's pewter badge."

"I wish I had as little cause as yourself to grumble," said the innkeeper. "With you it's a penny lost and whining for a pound. The men have been over from Uskavagh while you were asleep up yonder, Jib-boom ready to defy us."

"The cod-head!" cried Col, slamming his palm on the table. "It's as well I was not down to meet him, for I would send him about his business. You should have wakened me?"

"You have the memory of a crab when anger's on you; what have you to do now with the sloop and her losses?"

"That's true," said Corodale, "did I not forget? And there's this in it, that Flying Jib-boom is the cheapest man we could have for the business. He's gone, I suppose?"

"Half-way to Uskavagh by now, him and his men howling

like wild oats round the edge of Ollavat. And who else do you think was here a quarter of an hour ago? Your brother Duncan."

Col gave a start. "What!" said he. "You did not mention to him that I was here?"

"You need hardly ask! His coming could not have happened better for us, for he was standing in the door there before I noticed him, just when I was telling the skipper it was all by between you and me and the *Happy Return*. I can assure you he was glad to hear the news. The trade might be kidnapping to see the satisfaction it gave him to hear you were clear of it."

"The fellow's a lump: I'll say it, though he's my mother's son. What in God's name was he doing here?"

"He came a tide late for old Dermosary's funeral."

"A funeral fits him. He must be hard up for diversion when he would come over Uist and Benbecula without any bidding."

"The bidding, so far as I can see, was for yourself," said the innkeeper; "but the man who went last night to Corodale with it could not deliver it, seeing you were from home."

"Faith! my luck sometimes stays with me after all," said Col with satisfaction.

"I'm not so sure of the luck of it this time."

"What way that?"

The innkeeper made no answer, but bade his wife throw more peat on the fire. She hurried to his bidding, and

from a wicker creel piled up the turf. Col put down the empty horn and watched her with a grudging eye. "A spendthrift slut," he thought, "to build a peat-fire in that style at this time of night. If we had her at Corodale she would know different." Her task done, she took to her stool again, as far in the shade as possible, and continued her spinning.

"What was that about luck?" said Col after a little, showing he had not forgotten.

"Just a notion I had," said the innkeeper, and seemed to change the subject. "I have Macodrum to pay next Wednesday," said he; "I suppose I can be counting on yon fifty pounds?" They spoke in English because of the wife who span.

"Forty-nine eighteen, to be strict," said Col sharply; "and I'm not sure but with justice it should be a shilling or two less, even."

"Forty - nine eighteen or forty-nine nineteen: the point is, can I depend on getting it from you, Corodale? I'm risking plenty to be taking the whole credit for the sloop without having to pay all the losses and give you half the profits."

"When there's any,—when there's any, *loachain*," said Col. "If my memory's not failing, I have not had my hand on any profits since Whitsunday."

"Just so, just so! no more have I; but to come to the bit again, can I count on the money from you by Wednesday?"

Col rose to his feet and walked the floor with his hands in his

pockets. "By God!" said he, "if this had not happened at Arisaig! I'm like this, that I'm at the last steever nearly, and where am I to turn to?"

"There's another story besides that," said the innkeeper. "By all accounts you have what will do your turn, though you aye put such a poor mouth on."

Col's eyes snapped, and he stood dumfounded. "They're saying that, are they?" said he in a little. "Well, well; let them! just let them! That comes from the displays of my mother and our stuck priest, that must always be going about with as much bravado as if he had found MacNeil's *ulaidh*."

"MacNeil's *ulaidh*!" thought the innkeeper; "the thing's in his mind that I was thinking of." "You can't deny but you're pretty close," said he.

It was not a charge for Col of Corodale to take offence at, but he felt that it was one he must not pass. "That's where you misjudge me," said he. "I have to keep a watch on myself or I would spend what I have at the one bang. For the stuff itself I have not that regard that I would walk a mile out of my way to the seashore for it. But I am my father's son; you know the way he had of making money go when once he got his hand on it, and he had his own glisk of good fortune? I have—I have dreams. Tell me this, Sergeant. Are you content to rot among the rain in this bannock of sand they call Benbecula? You have travelled; you have seen things; there was a time when you did

not sleep every night of the year in the same bed under the same roof. I would think it would be happening often that in winter nights like this the dark and narrowness of Isle Benbecula would be worse than hell." He stopped, his face red. The woman was so struck by the vigour of his utterance she let her thread break in the heck of the spinning-wheel. The sea was noisier than ever on Each-kamish, and the rafters creaked with the wind.

"You will have another horn," said the innkeeper, and waiting no answer, ordered his wife to put it down. He tapped with his fingers on the rough table they sat at, and seemed to fall in deeps of thought.

"You're gey good at a guess," said he at last, speaking very slow and soft, without looking at Corodale. "You have not been far——"

"Once in Rotterdam, when my father was alive, with a cargo of cured herring, and it cost us a guinea to tie up to the Boompjies."

"You have not been far," repeated the innkeeper; "the thing with me is that I have been wherever the winds blow from. *Dhia na Grace!* I have not missed much, and here I'm in Benbecula with a business, and no way out of it, so far as I can see, but feet-first on a couple of spokes. For twenty years I never kent where I would lie to-morrow, and cared as little, so long as I had my stomach and enough to put to it. I have followed the sea; I know the smell of so many harbours I could not mind the

names of them in a day; and that's not the whole of it, for I sogered in the Royals. Am I content? says you. Man! there's whiles I lie sweating all night cursing the day I stranded here, where the sand is in my very palate."

"I can well believe it," said Col, "and I'm a native."

"It used to be, when I was at sea in dirty weather, at dirty work, and little for it, or when the corps was in America, my whole notion was for a tavern or an inn. What way it got into my mind God knows, but I thought if I had a business I would not call the king my cousin, as the other one said. But there's men that's meant to go roving, and men that's meant to keep inns for them, and I'm in the wrong place. I never see a ship going past there but I'm just sick. 'There's the Long Island,' I think I hear the captain saying, with his thumb over his shoulder, 'fifty miles off Scotland; there's not a tree on it,' and feels the way I have felt about some rock with gulls on it in the Indies, and no name on the chart. That's a place for a healthy man to have a business in, is it not?"

"Oh, the place has not done so badly by you," said Col, a little jealous for his native country-side.

"That's all your consideration, Corodale, the money that's in it, and I'm ruing the life wasted. You're a man, yourself, that if you had the spirit of a louse and less greed of the siller, you would be dashing. It would not be Uist for you. What's here

for the like of you and me? Rock and rain, and peat and lochs, and rags and black cattle."

"I'm telling you I have had my dreams," said Col. "You know that fine yourself. I never got a chance. You're always on that key of your travels, and smit me long since with notions of going somewhere myself. Well, it's your own choice that you gave them over, and planked yourself in Benbecula. I have as much spirit as them that think themselves my betters; and if I did not throw my money in the sea when I had it——"

"When you had it!" said the innkeeper, and whistled meaningly.

"When I had it, just! I'm telling you again I care no more for money than for a handful of sea-dulse. Let me get out of this bog we're in, and I would not be content to be breeding black cattle in Corodale and running cargoes underhand in a half sloop——"

"But let us come to the bit again," said the innkeeper. "I want to know if you will let me have my money by Wednesday. I must have it."

Col groaned, with his head in his hands and his elbows on the table. The woman finished her spinning, put past her wheel, and slipped out of the kitchen.

"You said something about my luck a little ago," said Col again. "What did you mean by yon?"

"Just a notion I had," said the innkeeper, inwardly satis-

fied to have the interest come round exactly where he wanted it, and without any tugging on his part. "You thought it was lucky you were from home when Father Ludovick's messenger went to Corodale, and I was thinking to myself it might be luckier, perhaps, if you had been there instead of your brother Duncan, and caught the north ford in the morning."

"It took me all my time to catch the south one," said Col. "I don't understand. I was never particularly keen for funerals; and I don't see for what reason the priest should want either me or Duncan at Dermosary's, for there was never much coming and going between the two families."

The innkeeper went on lil a man with a task by r
"You mentioned t s
treasure," said he. "It
be luck to come on it t
putting the islands thro
riddle and making t
bottom as some fo
one of them your ow
(*beannachd leis!*)— ve
the name of doing."

"It would be lu r to
born a duke," d C
most of us never n
till we're too c to
it. There's y
about the t
kens where it
this time? T ty
pounds— so
Lord! it's r
think it c v
without
in it."

"I'll swear old Dermosary never touched a coin of it, at

any rate. The man lived to the last like a cotter."

"But the priest, Sergeant—the priest!" said Col, like a man convinced, and yet keen to have his conclusions set at naught. "A priest had pickings from it when it lay in Loch Arkaig, and I would not put it past this one."

"Ludovick!" cried the innkeeper, and cracked a thumb. "Pooh! The man is in a mist continually. I am as dubious of the tribe of them as yourself; but I'll uphold that this one could not find the time to go and lift the stuff even if he was less honest. The *ulaidh*, whatever it be, wherever it be, is yonder yet."

A map of all the isles of the Cat—the bony ridge of the Uists, and Barra and Benbecula; the multitude of rocks drawn about the fretful borders of them, the lakes innumerable, flashed in the mind of the man of Corodale.

"Yonder!" said he, "and where in the name of God is yonder? I'm not the fool my father was, to think I could put the islands through a sieve and come upon the treasure that way. It might as well be somewhere in the stars."

The Sergeant splashed another horn of ale, "And you have no notion of a way to save yourself the trouble of riddling it?" said he. "What about the woman?"

"The woman? what woman?" said Col, and put up his hand, pretending to hide a yawn.

"Anna."

"What about her? I have not seen that bairn for years."

"She's on the unhappy side of twenty, and little of the bairn, I'll assure you. The fortune's hers——"

"In a twelvemonth!"

"In a twelvemonth, as you say. You appear to have considered the thing yourself. The fortune's hers, and there she's at an age for marrying. Your father made a fool of himself and gained—if I may say it—no very good repute, by hunting the *ulaidh* himself. It would be like the common luck of his life if his own son got it with no more trouble than just to throw his bonnet at a lady. By God! the girl, to look at, and by all accounts, is worth consideration if she had not a groat. Do you hear me, Col! Here are you with an old name, with a property—though you'll be telling me fifty pounds are ill to squeeze from it—and just about an age for marrying—it's stretch your hand and help yourself. The *Happy Return* is the only thing against you——"

Col smiled and took another look at his adviser.

"Upon the soul of me!" cried the innkeeper, "here am I talking, and you are wiser than myself. I see now your anxiety to have your name clear of the sloop, and this new craze of yours for an honest reputation."

"If one could be sure the stuff was there," said Col.

"It's there, I'll warrant you; and you're the man to get it. Twenty thousand pounds more or less."

"One could do a power of good with half of it."

"No doubt; and who could do it better than yourself, if you had the inclination?" said the innkeeper. "You should have been here at Dermosary's funeral; that's the point I'm on. The messenger went for you, and it was not the best of luck, though you say so, that he should have only got your brother. They're a softening influence, funerals; I count it an opportunity lost."

"Oh, there are other days," said Col. "We'll think of it."

He rose to go, hastily. When he opened the door the fury of the night astounded him; he swithered on the threshold. "*Mo chreach!* I had no idea it was so serious."

"You can stay for the night, if you like," said the innkeeper.

"Two days running out of Corodale!" said Col; "not I! I can be doing with two nights of it, but not two days with

such a clan of drones. I must be yonder by the cry of day. Good-night with you!"

The innkeeper listened to the footsteps plashing east. "Skate-mouth!" said he to himself. "The idea was boiling in him till the bubble of it was at his eyes, and 'We'll think of it,' quo' he. And 'One could do a power of good with half of it,' quo' he. There's a good one! And he's off skelping for fear I would mention the fifty pounds again. Not I, crafty Col, not I; there's more than fifty in it."

Far away towards Griminish were the sounds of ogle calling; at least it see like that at first, and the in cocked an ear. He d more. "The birds a to-night," he a it; "funeral folks : on the oth si , d I glad myself a t road, like the two Col

(To be continued.)

INTER AMICOS.

BY R. C. LEHMANN.

YE happy sunny days that were,
And oh ye comrades blithe and fair,
With laughter frank and debonair
 And hair so crisp and curly;
And thou, beloved and ancient town,
Where once I wore a cap and gown,
And saw the friends I loved go down
 Degree'd, but ah too early!

Myself I lingered; yet for me
The hour of parting had to be:
I took thy gifts, and gracelessly
 Forgot to thank the giver,
And went at length; and now a glow
Lies round each well-known scene, and so
My fancy makes e'en Camus flow
 A broad and shining river!

And all thy Courts and narrow streets
Seem fashioned into grave retreats,
And all thy Houses turned to seats
 Of piety and quiet;
Yet, mixed with these sedater joys,
Still, in my mind, I hear the noise
And share the sports of eager boys,
 And all their cheerful riot.

Thou too, her sister, set apart
For high-souled deeds and dreams of art,
Thou, Oxford, dost possess my heart
 Scarce less than she, who brought me
Safe through the barren tracts of earth
To fields aflame with sun and mirth,
And gave me eyes to see thy worth,
 And thy great worship taught me.

Cambridge and Oxford! and ye friends,
Brothers whose love can make amends
For loss of love, whose presence lends
 A blessing to dejection!
And ye, whose cherished memory still
With living warmth outlasts the chill
Of chance and change, whose faces fill
 My thoughts with pure affection.

Grant me your spirit; let me find
Deep-stored within my faithful mind
The gifts ye showered, unresigned
 To Time who fain would grasp them.
He turns his glass and speeds the sands
Where ambushed at our side he stands,—
He cannot fetter your kind hands,
 Oh friends, and I can clasp them.

And each dear spirit-shape whose face
Bears ever the enchanted grace
Of youth, ye friends whose earthly race
 Long long ago was finished,
Ye will not think I do you wrong
If here and there with jest and song
I chase an hour or two along,
 Nor deem my love diminished.

Dear Ben, how often stretched at ease
We lay beneath our Thames's trees,
Or, tired of lazy ways like these,
 Set out and rowed together!
How oft at evening have we sat
And talked of this and dreamed of that—
Of books or boats, of gun or bat,
 Green fields or purple heather!

I used to think of you, and grieve
To think no thinking could relieve
The doom that bade you take your leave
 Where low I saw you lying;

The present friends, and those who stray
Afar, not less beloved than they,
May Heaven be with them on their way—
Our absent friends, God bless them !

Nor may it be by death denied
That from the bourne where they abide
Once more we summon to our side
The lost familiar faces;
And cheat our senses with the sight
Of friends restored to life and light,
As though the silence and the night
Had spared them to their places.

IN THE TRACKS OF WAR.

I.

WE left Klerksdorp in a dust-storm so thick and incessant that it was difficult to tell where the houses ended and the open country began. The little town, which may once have been a clean, smiling place, has been for months the *corpus vile* of military operations. A dozen columns have made it their destination; the transport and supplies of the whole Western Army have been congested there, with the result that the town lands have been rubbed bare of grass, the streets furrowed into dust-heaps, and the lightest breeze turned into a dust-tornado. Our Cape carts rattled over the bridge of the Schoon Spruit—"Caller Water," as we might translate it in Scots, but here a low and muddy current between high banks—and, climbing a steep hill past the old town of Klerksdorp, came out of the fog into clearer veld, over which a gale of wind was blowing strongly. The desert was strewn with empty tins, which caught the sun like quartz; stands of barbed wire were everywhere on the broad uneven highway; little dust devils spouted at intervals on to the horizon. The place was like nothing so much as a large deserted brick-field in some Midland suburb.

There is one feature of the high veld which has not had the attention it deserves—I mean the wind. Ask a man

who has done three years' trekking what he mostly complains of, and he will be silent about food and drink, the sun by day and the frost by night, but he is certain to launch into picturesque language about the wind. The wind of winter blows not so unkindly as persistently. Day and night the cheek is flaming from its buffets. There is no shelter from scrub or koppie, for it is a most cunning wind, and will find a cranny to whistle through. Little wrinkles appear round blinking eyes, the voice gets a high pitch of protest, and a man begins to walk sideways like a crab to present the smallest surface to his enemy. And with the wind go all manner of tins, trundling from one skyline to another with a most purposeful determination. Somewhere—S.S.W. I should put the direction—there must be a Land of Tin-cans, where in some sheltered valley all the *débris* of the veld has come to anchor.

About ten o'clock the wind abated a little, and the road passed into a country of low hills with scrub of mimosa thorn along the flats. The bustard, which the Boers have so aptly named "korhaan," or scolding hen, strutted by the roadside, a few hawks circled about us, and an incurious secretary-bird flapped across our path. The first water appeared,—a melan-

choly stream called Rhenoster Spruit,—and the country grew hillier and greener till we outspanned for lunch at a farmhouse of some pretensions, with a large dam, a spruit, and a good patch of irrigated land. The owner had returned and was dwelling in a tent against the restoration of his homestead. A considerable herd of cattle grazed promiscuously on the meadow, and the farmer with philosophic calm was smoking his pipe in the shade. Apparently he was a man of substance, and above manual toil; for though he had been back for some time there was no sign of getting to work on repairs, such as we saw in smaller holdings. Fairly considered, this repatriation is a hard nut for the proud, indolent Boer, for it means the reversal of a life's order. His bywoners are scattered, his native boys refuse to return to him; there is nothing for the poor man to do but to take pick and hammer himself. Sooner or later he will do it, for in the last resort he is practical, but in the meantime he smokes and ponders on the mysteries of Providence and the odd chances of life.

In the afternoon our road lay through a pleasant undulating land, with green patches along the streams and tracts of bush relieving the monotony of the grey winter veld. Every farmhouse we passed was in the same condition,—roofless, windowless, dams broken, waterfurrows choked, and orchards devastated. Our way of making war may be effective as

war, but it inflicts terrible wounds upon the land. After a campaign of a dozen bloody fights reconstruction is simple; the groundwork remains for a new edifice. But, though the mortality be relatively small, our late methods have come very near to destroying the foundations of rural life. We have to build again from the beginning; we have to face questions of simple existence which seem strange to us, who in our complex society rarely catch sight of the bones of the social structure. To be sure there is hope. There is a wonderful recuperative power in the soil; the Boer is simpler in habits than most countrymen; and it is not a generation since he was starting at the same rudiments. Further, our own settlers will have the same beginnings, and there is a chance of rural communities, Boer and British, being more thoroughly welded together, because they can advance *pari passu* from the same starting-point. But to the new-comer the situation has a baffling oddness. It seems strange to be doling out the necessities of life to a whole community, to be dealing with a society, which must have been full of shades and divisions like all rural societies, as a featureless collection of units. Yet it is probable that the Boers themselves are the last to realise it. The people who crowded to the doors of the ruined farms as we passed were on the whole good-humoured, patient, and uncomplaining. They had set about repairing the breaches in their

fortunes, crudely but contentedly. At one farm we saw a curious Arcadian sight in this desert which war had made. Some small Boer children were herding a flock of sheep along a stream. A little girl in a sun-bonnet was carrying a lamb; two brown, ragged, bare-legged boys were amusing themselves with a penny whistle. To the children war and reconstruction alike can only have been a game; and hope and the future are to the young.

From Klerksdorp to Wolmaranstad the distance is some fifty miles, and it was almost nightfall before we descended with very weary cattle the long hill to our outspan. The country was one wide bare wold, the sky a soft glow of amber; and there was nothing between amber earth and amber sky save one solitary korhaan, scolding in the stillness. I do not know who the first Wolmarans may have

been, but he built a stad very like a little Border town—all huddled together and rising suddenly out of the waste. The Makasi Spruit is merely a string of muddied water-holes, but in the darkness it might have been the "wan water" of Liddel or Yarrow. We camped in one of the few rooms that had still a roof, and rid ourselves of the dust of the road in an old out-house in the company of a facetious monkey and a saturnine young eagle. When we had warmed ourselves and dined, I began to like Wolmaranstad, and, after a moonlight walk, I came to the conclusion that it was a most picturesque and charming town. But Wolmaranstad, like Melrose, should be seen by moonlight; for in the morning it looked little more than a collection of ugly shanties jumbled together in a dusty patch of veld.

II.

On the 12th August, in the usual dust-storm, we started for Lichtenburg. There is no highroad, but a series of wild cross-country paths merging constantly in farm-roads. No map is quite reliable, and local information is fallacious. The day being the festival of St Grouse, we shot conscientiously all morning with very poor success. The game was chiefly korhaan, and he is a hard bird to get on terms with. About the size of a blackcock, and as slow on the wing, he looks an easy mark; but if

stalked, he has a habit of rising just out of range, and repeating the performance till he has lured you a mile from your waggon, when he squawks in triumph and departs into the void. The orthodox way is to ride round him in slowly narrowing circles—a ruse which seems to baffle his otherwise alert intelligence. The country was rolling veld dotted with wait-a-bit thorn-bushes; the farmhouses few but large; the roads heavy with sand. In one hill-top farm, well named Uitkyk, we found an old farmer

and his son-in-law, who invited us to enter. The place was in fair order, being out of the track of columns, tolerably furnished, and with the usual portrait of the Reverend Andrew Murray on the wall. The farmer had no complaints to make, being well-to-do and too old to worry about earthly things; but the son-in-law, a carpenter by trade, was full of his grievances. The neighbourhood, being in ruins, was crying for his services, he said, but there was no material in the country to work with. Building material was scarce in Johannesburg and Pretoria; how much scarcer it must be in Wolmaranstad! This just complaint was frequent on our journey; for the Transvaal, served by its narrow-gauge single-line railways choked with military traffic, is badly equipped with the necessaries of reconstruction, and many willing workmen have to kick their heels in idleness.

We outspanned at midday near some pools of indifferent water, which our authorities had enthusiastically described as an abundant water-supply. There was a roofless farm close by, where a kind of hut of biscuit-tins had been erected, in which a taciturn young woman was nursing a child. There was also a boy of about sixteen in the place who had coffee with us, and took us afterwards to stalk *korhaan* with a rifle. He was newly home from commando, full of spirit and good-humour, and handled longingly the rifle which the law forbade him to

possess. All afternoon we passed roofless farmhouses crowded with women and children, and in most cases the farmer was getting forward in the work of restoration. Dams and water-furrows were being mended, some kind of roof put on the house, waggons cobbled together, and in many cases a good deal of ploughing had been done. The country grew bleaker as we advanced, trees disappeared, huge wind-swept downs fell away on each side of the path, and heavy rain-clouds came up from the west. The real rains begin in October, but chill showers often make their appearance in August, and I know nothing more desolate than the veld in such a storm. By-and-by we struck the path of a column, ploughed up by heavy gun-carriages, and in following the track somehow missed our proper road. The darkness came while we were yet far from our outspan, crawling up a great hill, which seemed endless. At the top a fine sight awaited us, for the whole country in front seemed on fire. A low line of hills was tipped with flame, and the racing fires were sweeping into the flats with the solid regularity of battalions. A moment before, and we had been in Shelley's

"Sad, grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world";

now we were in the midst of light and colour and elfish merriment. To me there is nothing solemn in a veld-fire, nothing but madness and

fantasy. The veld, so full at other times of its own sadness, the

“Acerbo indegno mistero della cose,”

becomes demented, and cries an impish defiance to the austere kings who sit in Orion. The sight raised our spirits, and we stumbled down the long hillside in a better temper. By-and-by a house of a sort appeared in the valley bottom, and a dog's bark told us that it was inhabited. To our relief we found that we had actually struck our outspan, Korannafontein, having approached it from the opposite side. The Koranna have long since gone from it, and the sole inhabitant was a Jew storekeeper, a friendly person, who assisted us to doctor our very weary horses. The ways of the Jew are past all finding out. Refuse to grant him a permit for himself and goods, and he says nothing; but he is in occupation months before the Gentile, unless that Gentile comes from Aberdeen. Our friend had his store stocked, and where he got the transport no man knows. He spoke well of the neighbourhood, both of Boer and native. The natives here, he said, are civilised. I asked him his definition of civilisation. “They speak Dutch,” he said,—an answer worth recording. We camped for the night behind what had once been the wool-shed. The floor of the tent was dirty, and, foolishly, I sent a boy to “mak schoon.” He made “schoon” by digging up dust with a shovel and storing it in heaps

in different corners. About midnight the rain fell heavily, and a little later a great wind rose and put those dust-heaps in circulation. I awoke from dreams of salmon-fishing with a profound conviction that I had been buried under a landslide. I crawled hastily through a flap followed by a stream of dust, and no ventilation could make that tent habitable, so that in the morning we awakened with faces like colliers, and throats as dry as the nether millstone.

From Korannafontein to Lichtenburg is something over forty miles, so we started at daybreak and breakfasted at a place called Rhenosterput, where some gentleman sent a Mauser bullet over our heads to remind us of his presence. The country was downland, very full of Namaqua partridge and the graceful spur-winged plover, a ranching country, for the streams had little fall and less water. At midday we outspanned at a pretty native village called Rooijantjesfontein, with a large church after the English village pattern, and a big dam lined with poplars. The life of a missionary, who bought a farm when land was cheap and had it cultivated by his congregation, is a pleasant one: he makes a large profit, spends easy days, and returns early to his native Germany. It is a type I have little patience with, for it discredits one of the most heroic of human callings, and turns loose on society the slim Christian native, who brings Christianity and civilisation into discredit.

We were now out of the region of tracks and on the main road to Lichtenburg, and all afternoon we travelled across the broad shallow basin of the Hartz River with our goal full in view on a distant hill-top. Far off on our right we saw a curious sight—a funeral waggon with a train of mourners creeping slowly across the veld. The Boers, as we heard from

many sources, are exhuming the dead from different battlefields, and bringing them, often from great distances, to the graveyards on their own homesteads. An odd sombre task, not without its grandeur; for to the veld farmer, as to the old Roman, there are Lares and Penates, and he wishes at the last to gather all his folk around him.

III.

Lichtenburg, as I have said, stands on a hill-top, but when one enters he finds a perfect model of a Dutch village. The streets are lined with willows and poplars, and seamed with water-furrows, and all the principal buildings surround a broad village green on which cattle were grazing. Seen in the morning it lost nothing of its attractiveness; and it dwells in my memory as a fresh clean place, looking over a wide upland country,—a place where men might lead honest lives, and meet the world fearlessly. It has its own relics of war. The court-house roof and walls are splashed with bullets, relics of Delarey's fight with the Northumberland Fusileers. General Delarey is himself the principal inhabitant. He owns much land in the neighbourhood, and his house stands a few miles out on the Mafeking road. From this district was drawn all that was most chivalrous and resolute in the Boer forces; and the name of their leader is still a synonym with lovers of good fighting men for the finest quality of his race.

The Zeerust road is as bad going for waggons as I have ever seen. It runs for miles through a desert where the soil is as black as in Lancashire, and a kind of coaly dust rises in everlasting clouds. We started late in the day, so that sunset found us some distance from water, in a featureless country. We were to outspan at the famous Malmani Oog—the eye of the Malmani; but a fountainhead is not a good goal on a dark night to ignorant travellers. Shortly after dusk we rode on ahead to look for the stream. Low slopes of hills rose on all sides, but nowhere could we see a gleam or a hollow which might be water. The distance may have been short, but to a hungry and thirsty man it seemed endless, as one hill after another was topped without any result. We found a fork in the road, and took the turn to the left as being more our idea of the way. As it happened we were trekking straight for the Kalahari Desert, and but for the lucky sound of a waggon on the other road might have been flounder-

ing there to-day. We turned aside to ask for information, and found we were all but at the Oog, which lay in the trees a hundred yards off. The owner of the waggon was returning to Lichtenburg with a sick wife, whom he had taken to Zeerust for a change. He had been a road surveyor under the late Government, had served on Delarey's staff, and had been taken prisoner. A quiet reserved man with dignified manners, he answered our questions without complaint or petulance. There is something noble in travel when pursued in this stately leisure. The great buck-waggon, the sixteen solemn oxen lumbering on, the master walking behind in the moonlight, have an air of patriarchal dignity, an older simplicity. I suppose fifteen to twenty miles might be a good day's march, but who shall measure value by miles? It is the life for dreams, for roadside fires, nights under the stars, new faces studied at leisure, good country talk, and the long thoughts of an unharassed soul. Let us by all means be up and doing, setting the world to rights and sounding our own trumpet; but is the most successful wholly at ease in the presence of great mountains and forests, or men whose lives share in the calm cycle of nature?

The night in tents was bitterly cold, and the morning bath, taken before sunrise in the springs of Malmani, was the most Arctic experience I have ever met. We left our drivers to inspan and follow,

and set off down the little stream with our guns. There are hours which live for ever in the memory,—hours of intense physical exhilaration, the pure wine of health and youth, when the mind has no thoughts save for the loveliness of earth, and the winds of morning stir the blood to a heavenly fervour. No man who has experienced such seasons can be other than an optimist. Dull nights in cities, heartless labours with pen and ink, the squalid worries of business and ambition, all are forgotten, and in the retrospect it is those hours which stand up like shining hill-tops,—the type of the pure world before our sad mortality had laid its spell upon it. It is not pleasure—the word is too debased in human parlance; nor happiness, for that is for calm delights. Call it joy, that "enthusiasm" which is now the perquisite of creeds and factions, but which of old belonged to the fauns and nymphs who followed Pan's piping in the woody hollows of Thessaly. I have known and loved many streams, but the little Malmani has a high place in my affections. The crystal water flowed out of great reed-beds into a shallow vale, where it wound in pools and cataracts to a broad ford below a ruined mill. Thence it passed again into reed-beds fringed with willows and departed from our ken. There was a bamboo covert opposite full of small singing birds; the cries of snipe and plover rose from the reed-beds, and the fall of water, rarest of South African sounds, tinkled like

silver in the cold morning air. We shot nothing, for we saw nothing; the glory of the scene was all that mortal eye could hold at once. And then our waggons splashed through the ford, and we had perforce to leave it.

We took a hill road, avoiding the detour by Malmani Drift, and after some hours in a country of wooded glens, came into the broad valley of the Klein Marico. The high veld and its scenery had been left far behind. Something half tropical, even in this mid-winter, was in the air of these rich lowlands. After the bleak uplands of Lichtenburg it was pleasant to see good timber, the green of winter crops, and abundant runnels of water. The farm-houses were larger and in fair repair,—embowered, too, in orange-groves, with the golden fruit bright among the glossy leaves. Blossom was appearing in every orchard; new and strange birds took the place of our enemy the korhaan; and for the first time on our journey we saw buck on the

slopes. The vale was ringed with stony tree-clad hills like the Riviera, and in the hot windless noon the dust hung in clouds about us, so that, in spite of water and greenery, my impression of that valley is one of thirst and discomfort. Zeerust is a pretty village close under the hills, with tree-lined streets,—a prosperous sleepy place, with no marks of the ravages of war. The farmers, too, are a different stock from the high-veld Boers; they get their living more easily, and in their swarthy faces and slouching walk one cannot read the hard-bitten spirit which inspired the men of Botha and Delarey. They seemed on good terms with their new masters. We attended a gymkhana given by the South African Constabulary, and the Dutch element easily predominated in the crowd which watched the races. A good-humoured element, too, for the men smoked and criticised the performances in all friendliness, while their women-kind in their Sunday clothes thronged to the marquees for tea.

IV.

The Rustenburg road runs due east through a fine defile called Klein Marico Poort, and thence in a country of thick bush for twenty miles to the ford of the Groot Marico. We started before dawn, and did not halt for breakfast till the said ford, by which time the sun was high in the heavens and we were very hot, dusty, and hungry. Lofty wooded hills rose to the north, and not forty

miles off lay the true hunting-veld, with koodoo, water-buck, and hippopotamus. Bird life was rich along the road—blue jays, rollers, and the handsome malicious game-bird which acts as scout to the guinea-fowl, and with his harsh call informs them of human presence. The farms were small and richly watered, with laden orange-groves and wide ruined verandahs. The people of Zeerust had spoken

with tears in their eyes of the beautiful condition of this road, but we found it by far the worst in our travels. It lay deep in sand, was strewn with ugly boulders, and at one ford was so impossible that we had to make a long detour over virgin veld. The Great Marico, which, like all streams in the northern watershed, joins the Limpopo, and indeed forms its chief feeder, is a muddy tropical water, very unlike the clear Malmani. Beyond it the country becomes bare and pastoral again, full of little farms, to which the bulk of the inhabitants had returned. It was the most smiling country we had seen, for bush-veld has an ineradicable air of barbarism, but a green open land with white homesteads among trees is the true type of a settled country. The young grass was already springing in the sheltered places, the cold dusty winds had gone, and a forehint of spring was in the calm evening.

We spent the night above the Elands River, a very beautiful full water, almost on the site of the battle. The Elands River fight seems to have slipped from the memory of a people who made much of lesser performances; but to soldiers it is easily the Thermopylæ of the war. Five hundred or so of Australians of different regiments, with a few Rhodesians, were marching to join another force, when they were cut off at Elands River by 3000 Boers. They were invited to surrender, and declined. A small number took up a position beside the

stream; the remainder held a little ridge in the centre of the amphitheatre of hills. For several days they toiled at dug-outs—terrible days, for they wereshelled continually from the whole rim of the amphitheatre. One relieving force from the west retired in despair; a relieving force from the east was deceived by false heliograms, and went away, believing the work accomplished. Then came the report that they had surrendered; and then, after some fifteen days, they were found by Lord Kitchener, still holding the forlorn post. It was a mere side-show, but to have been there was worth half the claspings in the campaign. More shells were fired into that little place than into Mafeking, and the courage of the few by the river who passed up water in the night to their comrades is beyond praise. The Colonials will long remember Elands River. It was their own show; without generalship or orders, against all the easy traditions of civilised warfare, the small band followed the Berserker maxim, and vindicated the ancient dignity of arms. In the morning we went over the place. The dug-outs were still mostly intact, and in a little graveyard beneath rude crosses slept the heroic dead.

A few miles farther on and the summit of a ridge was reached, from which the eye looked over a level valley to the superb western line of the Magaliesberg. Straight in front was the cleft of Magato's Nek, beyond which Rustenburg lay. The west-

ern Magaliesberg disappoints on closer acquaintance. The cliffs prove to be mere loose kranzes, the glens are waterless, the woods are nothing but barren thorn. But seen from afar in the clear air of dawn, when the darkness is still lurking in the hollows and the blue peaks are flushed with sunrise, it is a fairyland picture, a true mountain barrier to an enchanted land. Our road swung down a long slope to the Coster River, where we outspanned, and then through a sandy wilderness to the drift of the Selons. From this it climbed wearily up to the throat of the nek, a dull tract of country with few farms and no beauties. The nek, too, on closer view has little to commend it, save the prospect that opens on the other side. The level green plateau of Rustenburg lay before us, bounded on the north by a chain of koppies, and on the south by the long dark flanks of the Magaliesberg as it sweeps round to the east. A few miles and

the village itself came in sight, with a great church, as at Wakkerstroom, standing up like some simple rural cathedral over the little houses. Rustenburg was always the stronghold of the straitest sect of the Boers; and in the midst of the half-tropical country around, this sweep of pasture, crowned with a white kirk, had something austere and Puritan in its air,—the abode of a people with their own firm traditions, hostile and masterful towards the world. The voortrekker having fought his way through the Magaliesberg passes, outspanned his tired oxen on this pleasant upland, and called it his "city of rest." And it still looks its name, for no orchards and gardens can make it otherwise than a novelty in the landscape—sober, homely, and comforting, like some Old Testament Elam where there were twelve wells of water and three-score and ten palm-trees, or the "plain called Ease" wherein Christian "walked with much content."

V.

We took up our quarters at a farm a little way south of the town in the very shadow of the mountains. It was a long, low, rambling house called Boschdaal, with thick walls and cool passages. All around were noble gum-trees; a clear stream ran through the garden, which even at this season was gay with tropical flowers; and the orchard was heavy with oranges, lemons, and bananas.

A little conical hill behind had a path made to its summit, whence one had a wide prospect of the Magaliesberg and the whole plateau. There were sheer cliffs in the background, with a waterfall among them; and between them and the house were some miles of park-like country where buck came in the morning. The rooms were simply but pleasantly furnished; the walls a

forest of horns; and the book-cases full of European classics, with a great abundance of German story-books for children, telling how wicked Gretchen amended her ways, or little Hans saved his pennies. Altogether a charming dwelling-place, where a man might well spend his days in worthy leisure, shooting, farming, gardening, and smoking his pipe in the evening, with the sunset flaming over the hills.

We spent two nights in Rustenburg, visiting in the daytime a horse depôt to which a number of brood mares had been brought for winter grazing, and paying our respects to a neighbouring chief, Magato, who lives in a *stad* from which many town councils might learn a lesson of cleanliness and order. The natives are as rich as Jews from the war, owning fine spans of oxen and Army Service Corps waggons, and altogether disinclined to stir themselves for wages. This prosperity of the lower race must be a bitter pill for the Boer to swallow, as he drives in for his rations with a team of wretched donkeys, and sees his former servants with buck-waggons and cattle. We watched strings of Burghers arriving at the depôt, and at night several fires in the neighbouring fields told of their out-spans. Most of them were polite and communicative: a very few did their business in sulky silence. There was one man who took my fancy. Originally he must have been nearly seven feet high, but a

wound in the back had bent him double. He had long black hair, and sombre black eyes which looked straight before him into vacancy. He had a ramshackle home-made cart and eight donkeys, and a gigantic whip, of which he was a consummate master. A small boy did his business for him, while he sat hunched up on his cart, speaking hoarsely to his animals, and cracking his whip in the air,—a man for whom the foundations of the world had been upset, and henceforth, like Cain, a dweller apart. The work of repatriation is well done so far as the circumstances permit. Stock and transport are hard to come by, but the penniless farmer is at least sent back to his farm and kept from immediate want. But there is one class which no organisation has touched—the people who came in at the last surrender, and have never been near a depôt. Some of these believe that if they show their face to an official they will have their farms taken from them; and they are content to starve in the mean time till their leaders arrive from Europe with the funds which, they believe, will be forthcoming. It is pathetic to find this confidence in the mission of the Generals. They will take nothing from the new Government, but they trust their old leaders to provide for them. In the wilder parts of the country there are many cases of naked destitution—families living by digging for meerkats, and making porridge of uneatable herbs. All is done that

can be done ; troopers of police, land inspectors, and all officials whose duties take them about the country, report cases of need, and often carry with them means of relief. It is difficult to load an already overworked department, but it would be well if an Intelligence officer were attached to each *dépôt*, whose sole business would be to carry help to those who will not seek it.

On the third morning we started regretfully, for Pretoria was only two days distant. This was the pleasantest stage in our journey: the air was cool and fine, the roads good, water abundant, and a noble range of mountains kept us company. This is the tobacco-land of the Transvaal, whence comes the Magaliesberg brand, which has a high reputation in South Africa. There are no big farms but a great number of small holdings, richly irrigated and populous—the stronghold of Mr Kruger in former times, for he could always whistle his Rustenburgers to his will. Now and then a pass cleft the mountain line on our right, and in the afternoon we came in sight of the great gap through which the Crocodile River forces its passage. Farther east, and at a higher altitude, lay Silikat's Nek, which is called after Mosilikatse. It was approaching sunset as we crossed Commando Nek, which is divided from Crocodile Poort by a spur of mountain, and looked over the Witwatersberg rolling south to the Rand and the feverish life of cities. High up on a

peak stood a castellated block-house, looking like a peel tower in some old twilight of North-umbrian hills, and to the left and right the precipitous cliffs of the Magaliesberg ran out to the horizon. At the foot of the pass we forded the Magalies River, a stream of clear water running over a bed of grey-blue stones, and in another half hour we had crossed the bridge of the Crocodile and outspanned on the farther bank.

The rivers unite a mile away, and the cleft of the Poort to which the twin streams hurried stood out as black as ink in the moonlight. Far up on the hill-side the bush was burning, and the glare made the gorge like the gate of a mysterious world, guarded by flames and shadows. This Poort is fine by daylight, but still not more than an ordinary pass; but in the witching half-light it dominated the mind like a wild dream. After dinner we set out over the rough ground to where a cliff sank sheer from the moonlight into utter blackness. We heard the different notes of the two rivers—the rapid Magalies and the sedater Crocodile; and then we came to the bank of the united stream, and scrambling along it found ourselves in the throat of the pass. High walls of naked rock rose on either hand, and at last, after some hard walking, we saw a space of clear star-sown sky and the land beyond the mountains. I had expected a brawling torrent; instead, I found a long dark lagoon sleeping between the sheer sides. In the

profound silence the place had the air of some underground world. The black waters seemed to have drowsed there since the Creation, unfathomably deep—a witch's caldron, where the savage spirits of the hills might show their faces. Even as we gazed the moon came over the crest: the cliff in front sprang into a dazzling whiteness which shimmered back from the lagoon below. Far up on the summit was a great boulder which had a far-away likeness to an august human head. As the light fell on it the resemblance became a certainty: there were the long locks, the heavy brows, the profound eyes of a colossal Jove. Not Jove indeed, for he was the god of a

race, but that elder deity of the natural man, grey-haired Saturn, keeping his ageless vigil, quiet as a stone, over the generations of his children. Forgotten earth-dwellers, Mosilikatse and his chiefs, Boer commandoes, British yeomanry,—all had passed before those passionless eyes, as their successors will pass and be forgotten. And in the sense of man's littleness there is comfort, for it is part of the title of our inheritance. The veld and the mountains continue for ever, austere impartial to their human occupants: it is for the new-comer to prove his right to endure by the qualities which nature has marked for endurance.

THE END OF THE TETHER.—CONCLUSION.¹

BY JOSEPH CONRAD.

XIII.—continued.

THE bulwarks of the *Sofala* lying alongside the bank made a low, black wall on the undulating contour of the shore. Two masts and a funnel uprose from behind it with a great rake, as if about to fall: a solid, square elevation in the middle bore the ghostly shapes of white boats, the curves of davits, lines of rail and stanchions, all confused and mingling darkly everywhere; but low down, amidships, a single lighted port stared out on the night, perfectly round, like a small, full moon, whose yellow beam caught a patch of wet mud, the edge of trodden grass, two turns of heavy cable wound round the foot of a thick wooden post in the ground.

Mr Van Wyk, peering alongside, heard a muzzy boastful voice apparently jeering at a person called Prendergast. It mouthed abuse thickly, choked; then pronounced very distinctly the word "Murphy," and chuckled. Glasses tinkled tremulously. All these sounds came from the lighted port. Mr Van Wyk hesitated, stooped; it was impossible to look through unless he went down into the mud.

"Sterne," he said, half aloud.

The drunken voice within said gladly—

"Sterne—of course. Look at him blink. Look at him Sterne, Whalley, Massy. Massy, Whalley, Sterne. But Massy, the best. You can't come over him. He would just love to see you starve."

Mr Van Wyk moved away, made out farther forward, his shadowy head stuck out from under the awnings as if on the watch, and spoke quietly to Malay, "Is the mate asleep?"

"No. Here, at your service."

In a moment Sterne appeared walking as noiselessly as a cat on the wharf.

"It's so jolly dark, and I have no idea you would be down there at night."

"What's this horrible raving?" asked Mr Van Wyk, as if to explain the cause of his shudder that ran over him audibly.

"Jack's broken out on the drunk. That's our second. It's his way. He will be right enough by to-morrow afternoon, but only Mr Massy will keep on worrying up and down the deck. We had better get away."

He muttered suggestively of a talk "up at the house." He had long desired to effect an entrance there, but Mr Van Wyk nonchalantly demurred. It would not, he feared, be quite prudent, perhaps; and the

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opaque black shadow under one of the two big trees left at the landing-place swallowed them up, impenetrably dense, by the side of the wide river, that seemed to spin into threads of glitter the light of a few big stars dropped here and there upon its outspread and flowing stillness.

"The situation is grave beyond doubt," Mr Van Wyk said. Ghost-like in their white clothes they could not distinguish each others' features, and their feet made no sound on the soft earth. A sort of purring was heard. Mr Sterne felt gratified by such a beginning.

"I thought, Mr Van Wyk, a gentleman of your sort would see at once how awkwardly I was situated."

"Yes, very. Obviously his health is bad. Perhaps he's breaking up. I see, and he himself is well aware—I assume I am speaking to a man of sense—he is well aware that his legs are giving out."

"His legs—ah!" Mr Sterne was disconcerted, and then turned sulky. "You may call it his legs if you like; what I want to know is whether he intends to clear out quietly. That's a good one, too! His legs! Pooh!"

"Why, yes. Only look at the way he walks," Mr Van Wyk took him up in a perfectly cool and undoubting tone. "The question, however, is whether your sense of duty does not carry you too far from your true interest. After all, I too could do some-

thing to serve you. You know who I am."

"Everybody along the Straits has heard of you, sir."

Mr Van Wyk presumed that this meant something favourable. Sterne had a soft laugh at this pleasantry. He should think so! To the opening statement, that the partnership agreement was to expire at the end of this very trip, he gave an attentive assent. He was aware. One heard of nothing else on board all the blessed day long. As to Massy, it was no secret that he was in a jolly deep hole with these worn-out boilers. He would have to borrow somewhere a couple of hundred first of all to pay off the captain; and then he would have to raise money on mortgage upon the ship for the new boilers—that is, if he could find a lender at all. At best it meant loss of time, a break in the trade, short earnings for the year—and there was always the danger of having his connection filched away from him by the Germans. It was whispered about that he had already tried two firms. Neither would have anything to do with him. Ship too old, and the man too well known in the place. . . . Mr Sterne's final rapid winking remained buried in the deep darkness sibilating with his whispers.

"Supposing, then, he got the loan," Mr Van Wyk resumed in a deliberate undertone, "on your own showing he's more than likely to get a mortgagee's man thrust upon him as captain. For my part, I

know that I would make that very stipulation myself if I had to find the money. And as a matter of fact I am thinking of doing so. It would be worth my while in many ways. Do you see how this would bear on the case under discussion?"

"Thank you, sir. I am sure you couldn't get anybody that would care more for your interests."

"Well, it suits my interest that Captain Whalley should finish his time. I shall probably take a passage with you down the Straits. If that can be done, I'll be on the spot when all these changes take place, and in a position to look after your interests."

"Mr Van Wyk, I want nothing better. I am sure I am infinitely . . ."

"I take it, then, that this may be done without any trouble?"

"Well, sir, what risk there is can't be helped; but (speaking to you as my employer now) the thing is more safe than it looks. If anybody had told me of it I wouldn't have believed it, but I have been looking on myself. That old Serang has been trained up to the game. There's nothing the matter with his—his—limbs, sir. He's got used to do things on his own in a remarkable way. And let me tell you, sir, that Captain Whalley, poor man, is by no means useless. Fact. Let me explain to you, sir. He stiffens up that old monkey of a Malay, who knows well enough what to do. Why, he must have kept captain's

watches in all sorts of country ships off and on for the last five-and-twenty years. These natives, sir, as long as they have a white man close at the back will go on doing the right thing most surprisingly well—even if left quite to themselves. Only the white man must be of the sort to put starch into them, and the captain is just the one for that. Why, sir, he has drilled him so well that now he needs hardly speak at all. I have seen that little wrinkled ape made to take the ship out of Pangu Bay on a blowy morning and on all through the islands; take her out first-rate, sir, dodging under the old man's elbow, and in such quiet style that you could not have told for the life of you which of the two was doing the work up there. That's where—our poor friend would be still of use to the ship even if—if—he could no longer lift a foot, sir. Providing the Serang does not know that there's anything wrong."

"He doesn't."

"Naturally not. Quite beyond his apprehension. They aren't capable of finding out anything about us, sir."

"You seem to be a shrewd man," said Mr Van Wyk in a choked mutter, as though he were feeling sick.

"You'll find me a good enough servant, sir."

Mr Sterne hoped now for a handshake at least, but unexpectedly, with a "What's this? Better not to be seen together," Mr Van Wyk's white shape wavered, and instantly seemed to melt away in the

black air under the roof of boughs. The mate was startled. Yes. There was that faint thumping clatter.

He stole out silently from under the shade. The lighted port-hole shone from afar. His head swam with the intoxication of sudden success. What a thing it was to have a gentleman to deal with! He crept aboard, and there was something weird in the shadowy stretch of empty decks, echoing with shouts and blows proceeding from a darker part amidships. Mr Massy was raging before the door of the berth: the drunken voice within flowed on undisturbed in the violent racket of kicks.

"Shut up! Put your light out and turn in, you confounded swilling pig — you! D'you hear me, you beast?"

The kicking stopped, and in the pause the muzzy oracular voice announced from within—

"Ah! Massy, now — that's another thing. Massy's deep."

"Who's that aft there? You, Sterne? He'll drink himself into a fit of horrors." The chief engineer appeared vague and big at the corner of the engine-room.

"He will be fit enough to-morrow. I would let him be, Mr Massy."

Sterne slipped away into his berth, and at once had to sit down. His head swam with exultation. He got into his bunk as if in a dream. A feeling of profound peace, of pacific joy, came over him. On deck all was quiet.

Mr Massy, with his ear against the door of Jack's

cabin, listened critically to a deep stertorous breathing within. This was a dead-drunk sleep. The bout was over: tranquillised on that score, he too went in, and with slow wriggles got out of his old tweed jacket. It was a garment with many pockets, which he used to put on at odd times of the day, being subject to sudden chilly fits, and when he felt warmed he would take it off and hang it about anywhere all over the ship. It would be seen swinging on belaying-pins, thrown over the heads of winches, on people's very door-handles for that matter. Was he not the owner? But his favourite place was a hook on a wooden awning stanchion on the bridge, almost against the binnacle. He had even in the early days more than one tussle on that point with Captain Whalley, who desired the bridge to be kept tidy. He had been overawed then. Of late, though, he had been able to defy his partner with impunity. Captain Whalley never seemed to notice it now. As to the Malays, in their awe of that scowling man not one of the crew would dream of laying a hand on the thing, no matter where or what it swung from.

With an unexpectedness which made Mr Massy jump and drop the coat at his feet, there came from the silence of the next berth the crash and thud of a headlong, jingling, clattering fall. The faithful Jack must have dropped to sleep suddenly as he sat at his revels, and now had gone over chair and all, breaking, as it

seemed by the sound, every single glass and bottle in the place. After the terrific smash all was still for a time in there, as though he had killed himself outright on the spot. Mr Massy held his breath. At last a sleepy uneasy groaning sigh was exhaled slowly on the other side of the bulkhead.

"I hope to goodness he's too drunk to wake up now," muttered Mr Massy.

The sound of a softly knowing laugh nearly drove him to despair. He swore violently under his breath. The fool would keep him awake all night now for certain. He cursed his luck. He wanted to forget his maddening troubles in sleep sometimes. He could detect no movements. Without making the slightest attempt to get up, Jack went on sniggering to himself where he lay; then began to speak, where he had left off as it were—

"Massy! I love the dirty rascal. He would like to see his poor old Jack starve—but just you look where he has climbed to." . . . He hiccupped in a superior, leisurely manner. . . . "Ship-owning it with the best. A lottery ticket you want. Ha! ha! I will give you lottery tickets, my boy. Let the old ship sink and the old chum starve—that's right. He don't go wrong—Massy don't. Not he. He's a genius—that man is. That's the way to win your money. Ship and chum must go."

"The silly fool has taken it to heart," muttered Massy to

himself. And, listening with a softened expression of face for any slight sign of returning drowsiness, he was discouraged profoundly by a burst of laughter full of joyful irony.

"Would like to see her at the bottom of the sea! Oh, you clever, clever devil! Wish her sunk, eh? I should think you would, my boy; the damned old thing and all your troubles with her. Rake in the insurance money—turn your back on your old chum—all's well—gentleman again."

A grim stillness had come over Massy's face. Only his big black eyes rolled uneasily. The raving fool. And yet it was all true. Yes. Lottery tickets, too. All true. What? Beginning again? He wished he wouldn't. . . .

But it was even so. The imaginative drunkard on the other side of the bulkhead shook off the deathlike stillness that after his last words had fallen on the dark ship moored to a silent shore.

"Don't you dare to say anything against George Massy, Esquire. When he's tired of waiting he will do away with her. Look out! Down she goes—chum and all. He'll know how to . . ."

The voice hesitated, weary, dreamy, lost, as if dying away in a vast open space.

". . . Find a trick that will work. He's up to it—never fear . . ."

He must have been very drunk, for at last the heavy sleep gripped him with the suddenness of a magic spell, and the last word lengthened

itself into an interminable, noisy, in-drawn snore. And then even the snoring stopped, and all was still.

But it seemed as though Mr Massy had suddenly come to doubt the efficacy of sleep as against a man's troubles; or perhaps he had found the relief he needed in the stillness of a calm contemplation that will call up the image of wealth, of a stroke of luck, of long idleness, and may bring before you the imagined form of every desire; for, turning about and throwing his arms over the edge of his bunk, he stood there with his feet on his favourite old coat, looking out through the round port into the night over the river. Sometimes a breath of wind would enter and touch his face, a cool breath charged with the damp, fresh feel from a vast body of water. A glimmer here and there was all he could see of it; and once he might after all suppose he had dozed off, since there appeared before his vision, unexpectedly and connected with no dream, a row of flaming and gigantic figures—three nought seven one two—making up a number such as you may see on a lottery

ticket. And then all at once the port was no longer black: it was pearly grey, framing a shore crowded with houses, thatched roof beyond thatched roof, walls of mats and bamboo, gables of carved teak timber. Rows of dwellings raised on a forest of piles lined the steely band of the river, brimful and still, with the tide at the turn. This was Batu Beru—and the day had come.

Mr Massy shook himself, put on the tweed coat, and, shivering nervously as if from some great shock, made a note of the number. A fortunate, rare hint that. Yes; but to pursue fortune one wanted money—ready cash.

Then he went out and prepared to descend into the engine-room. Several small jobs had to be seen to, and Jack was lying dead drunk on the floor of his cabin, with the door locked at that. His gorge rose at the thought of work. Ay! But if you wanted to do nothing you had to get first a good bit of money. A ship won't save you. He cursed the *Sofala*. True, all true. He was tired of waiting for some chance that would rid him at last of that ship that had turned out a curse on his life.

XIV.

The deep, interminable hoot of the steam-whistle had, in its grave, vibrating note, something intolerable, which sent a slight shudder down Mr Van Wyk's back. It was the early afternoon; the *Sofala* was leaving Batu Beru for Pangu, the

next place of call. She swung in the stream, scantily attended by a few canoes, and, gliding on the broad river, became lost to view from the Van Wyk bungalow.

Its owner had not gone this time to see her off. Generally

he came down to the wharf, exchanged a few words with the bridge while she cast off, and waved his hand to Captain Whalley at the last moment. This day he did not even go as far as the balustrade of the verandah. "He couldn't see me if I did," he said to himself. "I wonder whether he can make out the house at all." And this thought somehow made him feel more alone than he had ever felt for all these years. What was it? six or seven? Seven. A long time.

He sat within the verandah with a closed book on his knee, and, as it were, looked out upon his solitude, as if the fact of Captain Whalley's blindness had opened his eyes to his own. There were many sorts of heartaches and troubles, and there was no place where they could not find a man out. And he felt ashamed, as though he had for six years behaved like a peevish boy.

His thought followed the *Sofala* on her way. On the spur of the moment he had acted impulsively, turning to the thing most pressing. And what else could he have done? Later on he should see. It was time he came out into the world, for a time at least. He had money—something could be arranged; he would grudge no time, no trouble, no loss of his solitude. It weighed on him now—and Captain Whalley appeared to him as he had sat shading his eyes, as if, being deceived in the trust of his faith, he were beyond all the good and evil that can be wrought by the hands of men.

His thoughts followed the *Sofala* down the river, winding about through the belt of the coast forest, between the buttressed shafts of the big trees, through the mangrove strip, and over the bar. The ship crossed it easily in broad daylight, piloted, as it happened, by Mr Sterne, who took the watch from four to six, and then went below to hug himself with delight at the prospect of being virtually employed by a rich man—like Mr Van Wyk. He could not see how any hitch could occur now. He did not seem able to get over the feeling of being "fixed up at last." From six to eight, in the course of duty, the Serang looked alone after the ship. She had a clear road before her now till about three in the morning, when she would close with the Pangu group. At eight Mr Sterne came out cheerily to take charge again till midnight. At ten he was still chirruping and humming to himself on the bridge, and about that time Mr Van Wyk's thought abandoned the *Sofala*. Mr Van Wyk had fallen asleep at last.

Massy, blocking the engine-room companion, jerked himself into his tweed jacket surlily, while the second waited with a scowl.

"Oh. You came out? You sot! Well, what have you got to say for yourself?"

He had been in charge of the engines till then. A sombre fury darkened his mind: a hot anger against the ship, against the facts of life, against the men for their cheating, against

himself too—because of an inward tremor in his heart.

An incomprehensible growl answered him.

"What? Can't you open your mouth now? You yelp out your infernal rot loud enough when you are drunk. What do you mean by abusing people in that way?—you old useless boozier, you!"

"Can't help it. Don't remember anything about it. You shouldn't listen."

"You dare to tell me! What do you mean by going on a drunk like this?"

"Don't ask me. Sick of the dam' boilers—you would be. Sick of life."

"I wish you were dead, then. You've made me sick of you. Don't you remember the uproar you made last night? You miserable old soaker!"

"No; I don't. Don't want to. Drink is drink."

"I wonder what prevents me from kicking you out. What do you want here?"

"Relieve you. You've been long enough down there, George."

"Don't you George me—you tippling old rascal, you! If I were to die to-morrow you would starve. Remember that. Say Mr Massy."

"Mr Massy," repeated the other stolidly.

Dishevelled, with dull blood-shot eyes, a snuffy, grimy shirt, greasy trousers, naked feet thrust into ragged slippers, he bolted in head down directly Massy had made way for him.

The chief engineer looked around. The deck was empty as far as the taffrail. All the

native passengers had left in Batu Beru this time, and no others had joined. The dial of the patent log tinkled periodically in the dark at the end of the ship. It was a dead calm, and, under the clouded sky, through the still air that seemed to cling warm, with a seaweed smell, to her slim hull, on a sea of sombre grey and unwrinkled, the ship moved on an even keel, as if floating detached in empty space. But Mr Massy slapped his forehead, tottered a little, and caught hold of a belaying-pin at the foot of the mast.

"I shall go mad," he muttered, walking across the deck unsteadily. A shovel was scraping loose coal down below—a fire-door clanged. Sterne on the bridge began whistling a new tune.

Captain Whalley, sitting on the couch, awake and fully dressed, heard the door of his cabin open. He did not move in the least, waiting to recognise the voice, with an appalling strain of prudence.

A bulkhead lamp blazed on the white paint, the crimson plush, the brown varnish of mahogany tops. The white wood packing-case rested under the bed-place, unopened for three years now, as though Captain Whalley had felt that, after the *Fair Maid* was gone, there could be no abiding-place on earth for his affections. His hands rested on his knees; his handsome head with big eyebrows presented a rigid profile to the doorway. The expected voice spoke out at last.

"Once more, then. What am I to call you?"

Ha! Massy. Again. The weariness of it crushed his heart—and the pain of shame was almost more than he could bear without crying out.

"Well. Is it to be 'partner,' still?"

"You don't know what you ask."

"I know what I want . . ."

Massy stepped in and closed the door.

". . . And I am going to have a try for it with you once more."

His whine was half persuasive, half menacing.

"For it's no manner of use to tell me that you are poor. You don't spend anything on yourself, that's true enough; but there's another name for that. You think you are going to have what you want out of me for three years, and then cast me off without hearing what I think of you. You think I would have submitted to your airs if I had known you had only a beggarly five hundred pounds in the world. You ought to have told me."

"Perhaps," said Captain Whalley, bowing his head. "And yet it has saved you." . . . Massy laughed scornfully. . . . "I have told you often enough since."

"And I don't believe you now. When I think how I let you lord it over my ship! Do you remember how you used to bullyrag me about my coat and *your* bridge? It was in his way. *His* bridge! 'And I won't be a party to this—and I couldn't think of doing

that.' Honest man! And now it all comes out. 'I am poor, and I can't. I have only this five hundred in the world.'"

He contemplated the immobility of Captain Whalley, that seemed to present an unconquerable obstacle in his path. His face took a mournful cast.

"You are a hard man."

"Enough," said Captain Whalley, turning upon him. "You shall get nothing from me, because I have nothing of mine to give away now."

"Tell that to the marines!"

Mr Massy, going out, looked back once; then the door closed, and Captain Whalley, alone, sat as still as before. He had nothing of his own—even his own past of honour and truth of just pride was gone. All his past life had fallen into the abyss. He had said his last good-bye to it. But what belonged to *her*, that he meant to save. Only a little money. He would take it to her in his own hands—this last gift of a life that had lasted too long. And an immense and fierce impulse, the very passion of paternity, flamed up with all the unquenched vigour of his worthless life in a desire to see her face.

Just across the deck Massy had gone straight to his cabin, struck a light, and hunted up the note of the dreamed number whose figures had flamed up also with the fierceness of another passion. He must contrive somehow not to miss a drawing. That number meant something. But what could he contrive to keep going?

"Wretched miser!" he mumbled.

If Mr Sterne could at no time have told him anything new about his partner, he could have told Mr Sterne that another use could be made of a man's affliction than just to kick him out, and thus defer the term of a difficult payment for a year. To keep the secret of the affliction and induce him to stay was a better move. If without means, he would be anxious to remain; and that settled the question of refunding him his share. He did not know exactly how much Captain Whalley was disabled; but if it so happened that he put the ship ashore somewhere for good and all, it was not the owner's fault—was it? He was not obliged to know that there was anything wrong. But probably nobody would raise such a point, and the ship was fully insured. He had had enough self-restraint to pay up the premiums. But this was not all. He could not believe Captain Whalley to be so confoundedly destitute as not to have some more money put away somewhere. If he, Massy, could get hold of it, that would pay for the boilers, and everything went on as before. And if she got lost in the end, so much the better. He hated her: he loathed the troubles that took his mind off the chances of fortune. He wished her at the bottom of the sea. And as, baffled, he left Captain Whalley's cabin, he enveloped in the same hatred the ship with the worn-out boilers

and the man with the dimmed eyes.

And our conduct after all is so much a matter of outside suggestion, that had it not been for his Jack's drunken gabble he would have there and then had it out with this miserable man, who would neither help, nor stay, nor yet lose the ship. The old fraud! But he restrained himself. Time enough for that—when he liked. There was a fearful new thought put into his head. Wasn't he up to it after all? How that beast Jack had raved! "Find a safe trick to get rid of her." Well, Jack was not so far wrong. A very clever trick had occurred to him. Ay! But what of the risk?

A feeling of pride—the pride of superiority to common prejudices—crept into his breast, made his heart beat fast, his mouth turn dry. Not every body would dare; but he was Massy, and he was up to it!

Six bells were struck on deck. Eleven! He drank a glass of water, then sat down for ten minutes or so to calm himself. Then he got out of his chest a small bull's-eye lantern of his own and lit it.

Almost opposite his berth, across the narrow passage under the bridge, there was, in the iron deck-structure covering the stokehold fiddle and the boiler-space, a storeroom with iron sides, iron roof, iron-plated floor, too, on account of the heat below. All sorts of rubbish was shot there: it had a mound of scrap-iron in a corner; rows of empty oil-cans;

sacks of cotton-waste, with a heap of charcoal, a deck-forge, fragments of an old hencoop, winch-covers all in rags, remnants of lamps, and a brown felt hat, discarded by a man dead now (of a fever on the Brazil coast), who had been once mate of the *Sofala*, had remained for years jammed forcibly behind a length of burst copper pipe, flung at some time or other out of the engine-room. A complete and impervious blackness pervaded that Capharnaum of forgotten things. A small shaft of light from Mr Massy's bull's-eye fell slanting right through it.

His coat was unbuttoned; he shot the bolt of the door (there was no other opening), and, squatting before the scrap-heap, began to pack his pockets with pieces of iron. He packed them carefully, as if the rusty nuts, the broken bolts, the links of cargo chain, had been so much gold he had that one chance to carry away. He packed his side-pockets till they bulged, the breast-pocket, the pockets inside. He turned over the pieces. Some he rejected. A small mist of powdered rust began to rise about his busy hands. Mr Massy knew something of the scientific basis of his clever trick. If you want to deflect a magnetic needle, soft iron is the best; likewise many small pieces in the pockets of a jacket would have more effect than a few large ones, because in that way you obtain a greater amount of surface for weight in your iron, and it's surface that tells.

He slipped out swiftly—two

strides sufficed—and in his cabin he perceived that his hands were all red—red with rust. It disconcerted him, although he had found them covered with blood: he looked himself over hastily. Why, his trousers too! He had been rubbing his rusty palms on his legs.

He tore off the waistband button in his haste, brushed his coat, washed his hands. Then the air of guilt left him and he sat down to wait.

He sat bolt upright and weighted with iron in his chair. He had a hard, lumpy bull against each hip, felt the scrappy iron in his pocket touch his ribs at every breath, the downward drag of all these pounds hanging upon his shoulders. He looked very dull too, sitting idle there, and his yellow face, with motionless black eyes, had something passive and sad in its quietness.

When he heard eight bells struck above his head, he rose and made ready to go out. His movements seemed aimless. His lower lip had dropped a little, his eyes roamed about the cabin, and the tremendous tension of his will had robbed them of every vestige of intelligence.

With the last stroke of the bell the Serang appeared noiselessly on the bridge to relieve the mate. Sterne overflowed with good nature, since he had nothing more to desire.

"Got your eyes well open yet, Serang? It's middling dark. I'll wait till you get your sight properly."

The old Malay murmured

looked up with his worn eyes, sidled away into the light of the binnacle, and, crossing his hands behind his back, fixed his eyes on the compass-card.

"You'll have to keep a good look-out ahead for land, about half-past three. It's fairly clear, though. You have looked in on the captain as you came along—eh? He knows the time? Well, then, I am off."

At the foot of the ladder he stood aside for the captain. He watched him go up with an even, certain tread, and remained thoughtful for a moment. "It's funny," he said to himself, "but you can never tell whether that man has seen you or not. He might have heard me breathe this time."

He was a wonderful man when all was said and done. They said he had had a name in his day. Mr Sterne could well believe it; and he concluded serenely that Captain Whalley must be able to see people more or less—as himself just now, for instance—but not being certain of anybody, had to keep up that unnoticing silence of manner for fear of giving himself away. Mr Sterne was a shrewd guesser.

This necessity of every moment brought home to Captain Whalley's heart the humiliation of his falsehood. He had drifted into it from paternal love, from incredulity, from boundless trust in divine justice meted out to men's feelings on this earth. He would give his poor Ivy the benefit of another month's work; perhaps the affliction was only

temporary. Surely God would not rob his child of his power to help, and cast him naked into a night without end. He had caught at every hope; and when the evidence of his misfortune was stronger than hope, he tried not to believe the manifest thing.

In vain. In the steadily darkening universe a sinister clearness fell upon his ideas. In the illuminating moments of suffering he saw life, men, all things, the whole earth with all her burden of created nature, as he had never seen them before.

Sometimes he was seized with a sudden vertigo and an overwhelming terror; and then the image of his daughter appeared. Her, too, he had never seen so clearly before. Was it possible that he should ever be unable to do anything whatever for her? Nothing. And not see her any more? Never.

Why? The punishment was too great for a little presumption, for a little pride. And at last he came to cling to his deception with a fierce determination to carry it out to the end, to save her money intact, and behold her once more with his own eyes. Afterwards—what? The idea of suicide was revolting to the vigour of his manhood. He had prayed for death till the prayers had stuck in his throat. All the days of his life he had prayed for daily bread, and not to be led into temptation, in a childlike humility of spirit. Did words mean anything? Whence did the gift

of speech come? The violent beating of his heart reverberated in his head—seemed to shake his brain to pieces.

He sat down heavily in the deck-chair to keep the pretence of his watch. The night was dark. All the nights were dark now.

"Serang," he said, half aloud.

"Ada, Tuan. I am here."

"There are clouds on the sky?"

"There are, Tuan."

"Let her be steered straight. North."

"She is going north, Tuan."

The Serang stepped back. Captain Whalley recognised Massy's footfalls on the bridge.

The engineer walked over to port and returned, passing behind the chair several times. Captain Whalley recognised an unusual character as of prudent care in this prowling. The near presence of that man brought with it always a recrudescence of moral suffering for Captain Whalley. It was not of remorse. After all, he had done nothing but good to the poor devil. There was also a sense of danger—the necessity of a greater care.

Massy stopped and said—

"So you still say you must go?"

"I must indeed."

"And you couldn't at least leave the money for a term of years?"

"Impossible."

"Can't trust it with me without your care, eh?"

Captain Whalley remained silent. Massy sighed deeply over the back of the chair.

"It would just do to save

me," he said in a tremulous voice.

"I've saved you once."

The chief engineer took off his coat with careful movements, and proceeded to feel for the brass hook screwed into the wooden stanchion. For this purpose he placed himself right in front of the binnacle, thus hiding completely the compass-card from the quartermaster at the wheel. "Tuan!" the man at last murmured softly, meaning to let the white man know that he could not see to steer.

Mr Massy had accomplished his purpose. The coat was hanging from the nail, within six inches of the binnacle. And directly he had stepped aside the quartermaster, a middle-aged, pock-marked, Sumatra Malay, almost as dark as a negro, perceived with amazement that in that short time, in this smooth water, with no wind at all, the ship had gone swinging far out of her course. He had never known her get away like this before. With a slight grunt of astonishment he turned the wheel hastily to bring her head back north, which was the course. The grinding of the steering-chains, the chiding murmurs of the Serang, who had come over to the wheel, made a slight stir, which attracted Captain Whalley's anxious attention. He said, "Take better care." Then everything settled to the usual quiet on the bridge. Mr Massy had disappeared.

But the iron in the pockets

of the coat had done its work; and the *Sofala*, heading north by the compass, made untrue by this simple device, was no longer making a safe course for Pangu Bay.

The hiss of water parted by her stem, the throb of her engines, all the sounds of her faithful and laborious life, went on uninterrupted in the great calm of the sea joining on all sides the motionless layer of cloud over the sky. A gentle stillness as vast as the world seemed to wait upon her path, enveloping her lovingly in a supreme caress. Mr Massy thought there could be no better night for an arranged shipwreck.

Run up high and dry on one of the reefs east of Pangu—wait for daylight—hole in the bottom—out boats—Pangu Bay same evening. That's about it. As soon as she touched he would hasten on the bridge, get hold of the coat (nobody would notice in the dark), and shake it upside-down over the side, or even fling it into the sea. A detail. Who could guess? Coat been seen hanging there from that hook hundreds of times. Nevertheless, when he sat down on the lower step of the bridge-ladder his knees knocked together a little. The waiting part was the worst of it. At times he would begin to pant quickly, as though he had been running, and then breathe largely, swelling with the intimate sense of a mastered fate. Now and then he would hear the shuffle of the Serang's bare feet up there: quiet, low voices would

exchange a few words, and lapse almost at once into silence. . . .

"Tell me directly you see any land, Serang."

"Yes, Tuan. Not yet."

"No, not yet," Captain Whalley would agree.

The ship had been the best friend of his decline. He had sent all the money he had made by and in the *Sofala* to his daughter. His thought lingered on the name. How often he and his wife had talked over the cot of the child in the big stern-cabin of the *Condor*; she would grow up, she would marry, she would love them, they would live near her and look at her happiness—it would go on without end. Well, his wife was dead, to the child he had given all he had to give; he wished he could come near her, see her, see her face once, live in the sound of her voice, that could make the darkness of the living grave ready for him supportable. He had been starved of love too long. He imagined her tenderness.

The Serang had been peering forward, and now and then glancing at the chair. He fidgeted restlessly, and suddenly burst out close to Captain Whalley—

"Tuan, do you see anything of the land?"

The alarmed voice brought Captain Whalley to his feet at once. He! See! And at the question, the curse of his blindness seemed to fall on him with a hundredfold force.

"What's the time?" he cried.

"Half-past three, Tuan."

"We are close. You *must* see. Look, I say. Look."

Mr Massy, awakened by the agitated voices from a short doze on the lowest step, wondered why he was there. Ah! A faintness came over him. It is one thing to sow the seed of an accident and another to see the monstrous fruit hanging over your head ready to fall in the sound of agitated voices.

"There's no danger," he muttered thickly.

The horror of incertitude had seized upon Captain Whalley, the miserable mistrust of men, of things—of the very earth. He had steered that very course thirty-six times by the same compass—if anything was certain in this world it was its absolute, unerring correctness. Then what had happened? Did the *Serang* lie? Why lie? Why? Was he going blind too?

"Is there a mist? Look low on the water. Low down, I say."

"Tuan, there's no mist. See for yourself."

Captain Whalley steadied himself by an effort. Should he stop the engines at once and give himself away. A gust of irresolution swayed all sorts of bizarre notions in his mind. The unusual had come, and he was not fit to deal with it. In this passage of inexpressible anguish he saw her face—the face of a young girl—with an amazing strength of illusion. No, he must not give himself away after having gone so far for her sake. "You steered the course? You made it? Speak the truth."

"Ya, Tuan. On the course now. Look."

Captain Whalley strode to the binnacle, which to him made such a dim spot of light in an infinity of shapeless shadow. By bending his face right down to the glass he had been able before . . .

Having to stoop so low, he put out, instinctively, his arm to where he knew there was a stanchion to steady himself against. His hand closed on something that was not wood but cloth. The slight pull adding to the weight, the loop broke, and Mr Massy's coat falling, struck the deck heavily with a dull thump, accompanied by a lot of clicks.

"What's this?"

Captain Whalley fell on his knees, with groping hands extended in a frank gesture of blindness. They trembled at last, these hands feeling for the truth. He saw it. Wreck her! His ship. Oh no. Not that.

"Jump and stop her!" he roared out in a voice not his own.

He ran himself—hands forward, a blind man, and while the clanging of the gong echoed still all over the ship, she seemed to butt full tilt into the side of a mountain.

It was low water along the north side of the strait. Mr Massy had not reckoned on that. Instead of running aground for half her length, the *Sofala* butted the sheer ridge of a stone reef which would have been awash at high-water. This made the shock absolutely terrific. Everybody in the ship that was standing

was thrown down headlong: the shaken rigging made a great rattling to the very trucks. All the lights went out: several chain-guys, snapping, clattered against the funnel: there were crashes, pings of parted wire-rope, splintering sounds, loud cracks, the masthead lamp flew over the bows, and all the doors about the deck began to bang heavily. Then, after having hit, she rebounded, hit the second time the very same spot like a battering-ram. This completed the havoc: the funnel, with all the guys gone, fell over with a hollow sound of thunder, smashing the wheel to bits, crushing the frame of the awnings, breaking the lockers, filling the bridge with a mass of splinters, sticks, and broken wood. Captain Whalley picked himself up and stood knee-deep in wreckage, torn, bleeding, knowing the nature of the danger he had escaped mostly by the sound, and holding Mr Massy's coat in his arms.

By this time Sterne (he had been flung out of his bunk) had set the engines astern. They worked for a few turns, then a voice bawled out, "Get out of the damned engine-room, Jack!"—and they stopped; but the ship had gone clear of the reef and lay still, with a heavy cloud of steam issuing from the broken deck-pipes, and vanishing in wispy shapes into the night. Notwithstanding the suddenness of the disaster there was no shouting, as if the very violence of the shock had half-stunned the shadowy lot of people swaying here and there

about her decks. The voice of the Serang pronounced distinctly above the confused murmurs—

"Fifteen fathom." He had heaved the lead.

Mr Sterne cried out next in a strained pitch—

"Where the devil has she got to? Where are we?"

Captain Whalley replied in calm bass—

"Amongst the reefs to the eastward."

"You know it, sir? Then she will never get out again."

"She will be sunk in five minutes. Boats, Sterne. Even one will save you all in this calm."

The Chinaman stokers went in a disorderly rush for the port boats. Nobody tried to check them. The Malays, after a moment of confusion, were quiet, and Mr Sterne showed a good countenance. Captain Whalley had not moved. His thoughts were darker than this night in which he had lost his first ship.

"He made me lose a ship."

Another tall figure standing before him amongst the litter of the smash on the bridge whispered insanely—

"Say nothing of it."

Massy stumbled closer. Captain Whalley heard the chattering of his teeth.

"I have the coat."

"Throw it down and come along," urged the chattering voice. "B-b-b-b-boat!"

"You will get fifteen years for this."

Mr Massy had lost his voice. His speech was a mere dry rustling in his throat.

"Have mercy!"

"Had you any when you made me lose my ship? Mr Massy, you shall get fifteen years for it!"

"I wanted money! Money! My own money! I will give you some money. Take half of it. You love money yourself."

"There's a justice . . ."

Massy made an awful effort, and in a strange, half-choked utterance—

"You blind devil! It's you that drove me to it."

Captain Whalley, hugging the coat to his breast, made no sound. The light had ebbed for ever from the world—let everything go. But this man should not escape scot-free.

Sterne's voice commanded—

"Lower away!"

The blocks rattled.

"Now, then," he cried, "over with you. This way. You, Jack, here. Mr Massy! Mr Massy! Captain! Quick, sir! Let's get——"

"I shall go to prison for trying to cheat the insurance, but you'll get exposed; you, honest man, who has been cheating me, you are poor. Aren't you? You've nothing but the five hundred pounds. Well, you have nothing now at all. The ship's lost, and the insurance won't be paid."

Captain Whalley did not move. True! Ivy's money! Gone in this wreck. Again he had a flash of insight. He was indeed at the end of his tether.

Urgent voices cried out together alongside. Massy did not seem able to tear himself

away from the bridge. He chattered and hissed despairingly—

"Give it up to me! Give it up!"

"No," said Captain Whalley; "I could not give it up. You had better go. Don't wait, man, if you want to live. She's settling down by the head fast. No; I shall keep it, but I shall stay on board."

Massy did not seem to understand; but the love of life, awakened suddenly, drove him away from the bridge.

Captain Whalley laid the coat down, and stumbled amongst the heaps of wreckage to the side.

"Is Mr Massy in with you?" he called out into the night.

Sterne from the boat shouted—

"Yes; we've got him. Come along, sir. It's madness to stay longer."

Captain Whalley felt along the rail carefully, and, without a word, cast off the painter. They were expecting him still down there. They were waiting, till a voice suddenly exclaimed—

"We are adrift! Shove off!"

"Captain Whalley! Leap! . . . pull up a little . . . leap! You can swim."

In that old heart, in that vigorous body, there was, that nothing should be wanting, a horror of death that apparently could not be overcome by the horror of blindness. But after all, for Ivy he had carried his point, walking in his darkness to the very verge of a crime.

God had not listened to his prayers. The light had finished ebbing out of the world; not a glimmer. It was a dark waste; but it was unseemly that a Whalley who had gone so far to carry a point should continue to live. He must pay the price.

"Leap as far as you can, sir; we will pick you up."

They did not hear him answer. But their shouting seemed to remind him of something. He groped his way back, and sought for Mr Massy's coat. He could swim indeed; people sucked down by the whirlpool of a sinking ship do come up sometimes to the surface, and it was unseemly that a Whalley, who had made up his mind to die, should be beguiled by chance into a struggle. He would put all these pieces of iron into his own pockets.

They, looking from the boat, saw the *Sofala*, a black mass upon a black sea, lying still at an appalling cant. No sound came from her. Then, with a great bizarre shuffling noise, as if the boilers had broken through the bulkheads, and with a faint muffled detonation, where the ship had been there appeared for a moment something standing upright and narrow, like a rook out of the sea. Then that too disappeared.

When the *Sofala* failed to come back to Batu Beru at the proper time, Mr Van Wyk understood at once that he would never see her any more. But he did not know what had happened till some months

afterwards, when, in a native craft lent him by his Sultan, he had made his way to the *Sofala's* port of registry, where already her existence and the official inquiry into her loss were beginning to be forgotten.

It had not been a very remarkable or interesting case, except for the fact that the captain had gone down with his sinking ship. It was the only life lost; and Mr Van Wyk would not have been able to learn any details had it not been for Sterne, whom he met one day on the quay near the bridge over the creek, almost on the very spot where Captain Whalley, to preserve his daughter's five hundred pounds intact, had turned to get a sampan which would take him on board the *Sofala*.

From afar Mr Van Wyk saw Sterne blink straight at him and raise his hand to his hat. They drew into the shade of a building (it was a bank), and the mate related how the boat with the crew got into Pangu Bay about six hours after the accident, and how they had lived for a fortnight in a state of destitution before they found an opportunity to get away from that beastly place. The inquiry had exonerated everybody from all blame. The loss of the ship was put down to an unusual set of the current. Indeed, it could not have been anything else: there was no other way to account for the ship being set seven miles to the eastward of her position during the middle watch.

"A piece of bad luck for me, sir."

Sterne passed his tongue on his lips and glanced aside. "I lost the advantage of being employed by you, sir. I can never be sorry enough. But here it is: one man's poison, another man's meat. This could not have been handier for Mr Massy if he had arranged that shipwreck himself. The most timely total loss I've ever heard of."

"What became of that Massy?" asked Mr Van Wyk.

"He, sir? Ha! ha! He would keep on telling me that he meant to buy another ship; but as soon as he had the money in his pocket he cleared out for Manilla by mail-boat early in the morning. I gave him chase right aboard, and he told me then he was going to make his fortune dead sure in Manilla. I could go to the devil for all he cared. And yet he as good as promised to give me the command if I didn't talk too much."

"You never said anything . . ." Mr Van Wyk began.

"Not I, sir. Why should I? I mean to get on, but the dead aren't in my way," said Sterne. His eyelids were beating rapidly, then drooped for an instant. "Besides, sir, it would have been an awkward business. You made me hold my tongue just a bit too long."

"Do you know how it was that Captain Whalley remained on board? Did he really refuse to leave? Come now! Or was it perhaps an accidental . . .?"

"Nothing!" Sterne interrupted with energy. "I tell you I yelled for him to leap overboard. He simply *must*

have cast off the painter of the boat himself. We all yelled to him—that is, Jack and I. He wouldn't even answer us. The ship was as silent as a grave to the last. Then the boilers fetched away, and down she went. Accident! Not it! The game was up, sir, I tell you."

This was all that Sterne had to say.

Mr Van Wyk had been of course made the guest of the club for a fortnight, and it was there that he met the lawyer in whose office had been signed the agreement between Massy and Captain Whalley.

"Extraordinary old man," he said. "He came into my office from nowhere in particular as you may say, with his five hundred pounds to place, and that engineer fellow following him anxiously. And now he is gone out a little inexplicably, just as he came. I could never understand him quite. There was no mystery at all about that Massy, eh? I wonder whether Whalley refused to leave the ship. It would have been foolish. He was blameless, as the court found."

Mr Van Wyk had known him well, he said, and he could not believe in suicide. Such an act would not have been in character with what he knew of the man.

"It is my opinion, too," the lawyer agreed. The general theory was that the captain had remained too long on board trying to save something of importance. Perhaps the chart which would clear him, or else something of value in his cabin.

The painter of the boat had come adrift of itself, it was supposed. However, strange to say, some little time before that voyage poor Whalley had called in his office and had left with him a sealed envelope addressed to his daughter, to be forwarded to her in case of his death. Still it was nothing very unusual, especially in a man of his age. Mr Van Wyk shook his head. Captain Whalley looked good for a hundred years.

"Perfectly true," assented the lawyer. "The old fellow looked as though he had come into the world full-grown and with that long beard. I could never, somehow, imagine him either younger or older—don't you know. There was a sense of physical power about that man too. And perhaps that was the secret of that something peculiar in his person which struck everybody who came in contact with him. He looked indestructible by any ordinary means that put an end to the rest of us. His deliberate, stately courtesy of manner was full of significance. It was as though he were certain of having plenty of time for everything. Yes, there was something indestructible about him; and the way he talked sometimes you might have thought he believed it himself. When he called on me last with that letter he wanted me to take charge of, he was not depressed at all. Perhaps a shade more deliberate in his talk and manner. Not depressed in the least. Had he a presentiment, I wonder? Perhaps! Still it seems a miser-

able end for such a striking figure."

"Oh yes! It was a miserable end," Mr Van Wyk said, with so much fervour that the lawyer looked up at him curiously; and afterwards, after parting with him, he remarked to an acquaintance—

"Queer person that Dutch tobacco-planter from Batu Beru. Know anything of him?"

"Heaps of money," answered the bank manager. "I hear he's going home by the next mail to form a company to take over his estates. Another tobacco district thrown open. He's wise, I think. These good times won't last for ever."

In the southern hemisphere Captain Whalley's daughter had no presentiment of evil when she opened the envelope addressed to her in the lawyer's handwriting. She had received it in the afternoon; all the boarders had gone out, her boys were at school, her husband sat upstairs in his big arm-chair with a book, thin-faced, wrapped up in rugs to the waist. The house was still, and the greyness of a cloudy day lay against the panes of three lofty windows.

In a shabby dining-room, where a faint cold smell of dishes lingered all the year round, sitting at the end of a long table surrounded by many chairs pushed in with their backs close against the edge of the perpetually laid table-cloth, she read the opening sentences: "Most profound regret—painful duty—your father is no more—in accordance with his

instructions—fatal casualty—consolation—no blame attached to his memory. . . .”

Her face was thin, her temples a little sunk under the smooth bands of black hair, her lips remained resolutely compressed, while her dark eyes grew larger, till at last, with a low cry, she stood up, and instantly stooped to pick up another envelope which had slipped off her knees on to the floor.

She tore it open, snatched out the enclosure. . . .

“My dearest child,” it said, “I am writing this while I am able yet to write legibly. I am trying hard to save for you all the money that is left; I have only kept it to serve you better. It is yours. It shall not be lost; it shall not be touched. There’s five hundred pounds. Of what I have earned I have kept nothing back till now. For the future, if I live, I must keep back some—a little—to bring me to you. I must come to you. I must see you once more.

“It is hard to believe that you will ever look on these lines. God seems to have forgotten me. I want to see you—and yet death would be a greater favour. If you ever read these words, I charge you to begin by thanking a God merciful at last, for I shall be dead then, and it will be well. My dear, I am at the end of my tether.”

The next paragraph began

with the words: “My sight is going . . .”

She read no more that day. The hand holding up the paper to her eyes fell slowly, and her slender figure in a plain black dress walked rigidly to the window. Her eyes were dry: no cry of sorrow or whisper of thanks went up to heaven from her lips. Life had been too hard, for all the efforts of his love. It had silenced her emotions. But for the first time in all these years its sting had departed, the carking care of poverty, the meanness of a hard struggle for bread. Even the image of her husband and of her children seemed to glide away from her into the grey twilight; it was her father’s face alone that she saw, as though he had come to see her, always quiet and big, as she had seen him last, but with something more august and tender in his aspect.

She slipped his folded letter between the two buttons of her plain black bodice, and leaning her forehead against a window-pane remained there till dusk, perfectly motionless, giving him all the time she could spare. Gone! Was it possible? My God, was it possible! The blow had come softened by the spaces of the earth, by the years of absence. There had been whole days when she had not thought of him at all—had no time. But she had loved him, she felt she had loved him, after all.

A S P A S I A.

BY GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

Translated by Sir Theodore Martin, K.C.B.

THY face, Aspasia, ever and anon
Is present to my thought. In crowded haunts
It flashes for a moment on my sight,
'Mid other faces. Whensoe'er I roam
The fields, where nought disturbs my solitude,
On sun-bright days, or 'neath the silent stars,
As though by some sweet harmony evoked,
Kindling a rapture nigh akin to pain,
That glorious vision rises up once more.
Oh! how adored, ye gods, and how at once
Transport to me, and pain! I never scent
The perfume wafted from some flowery bank,
Or from sweet-smelling blossoms in the streets,
But I do see thee, as thou wert that day
Thou bad'st me welcome in thy brilliant rooms,
Filled with the odours of the new-blown flowers
Of early springtime, where, in robe array'd
Of purple violet, thy angelic form,
On snow-white furs reclined, first met my gaze,
Breathing a spell voluptuous; and when thou,
Skill'd in the lures of the enchantress, shower'd'st
Loud passionate kisses on the pouting lips
Of thy young sons, thy snowy throat the while
Bent over them, and when thy shapely hands
Clasp'd them, who knew not why thou wert so fond,
Close to thy veil'd and most alluring breast.
Then a new heaven, new earth, a light divine
Seem'd on my soul to dawn! Thus in my heart,
Not utterly defenceless, did thine arm
Plant with fell force a shaft, which, rooted there,
I bore with loud lamenting, till the sun
Twice in his course brought round that fatal day.

Lady, thy beauty to my thinking seem'd
A radiance divine. The effects are kin
Of beauty and of music's sweet accords,

In oftentimes revealing to the soul
The mysteries of lost Elysian bliss.
Thence does the stricken swain deem all divine
A being of his phantasy begot,
That fair ideal of the enamoured soul,
Which in itself comprises wellnigh all
Olympus holds of beautiful and best
In looks, and voice, and flowing robes, combined
In her, for whom the ecstatic lover thinks
Confusedly, that he is steeped in love.
Yet 'tis not her, but his ideal dream
He loves, and folds in passion to his breast.
Aware at last of his mistake, and how
All that he treasured most has lost its charm,
In angry mood he oftentimes turns to blame
His lady-love for faults that are not hers.
To these ideal heights the female mind
But rarely mounts. The woman thinks not of,
Nor can she comprehend, the world of dreams
Her beauty in a noble heart inspires.
Such high imaginings are not for her.
Vain are the hopes that man, deluded man,
Builds on the dazzling radiance of her looks;
Vain, meanings to demand of them, profound,
Suggestive, more far-reaching than a man's,
Since less all ways than his her nature is.
Even as her frame more tender is and soft,
So is her soul less capable and strong.

Neither couldst thou, Aspasia, conceive
The thoughts that, for a while thou didst inspire
Within my fevered brain. Ne'er didst thou know,
What love immeasurable, what pangs intense,
What feelings past all words, what frenzied thoughts
Thou didst arouse in me; nor e'er will come
A time when thou shalt understand them. So
The skill'd musician, when he plays or sings,
Is ignorant of the effect that hand or voice
Creates in him that hears. Now she is dead,
That once so loved Aspasia. Low she lies,
The erewhile one sole object of my life!
Save when, like some dear shade, from time to time
She flits before mine eyes, and straight is gone.

Thou livest on, not only beautiful,
But so most beautiful, that in my eyes
Thou dost excel all others. Yet 'tis quench'd,
The fiery passion that of thee was born;
And why? Because it was not thee I loved,
But that Divinity, who in my heart
Once lived, and now has there a sepulchre.
Her long I worshipped, and was so entranced
With her celestial beauty, that although
I knew thee from the first for what thou art,—
Thy guile, thy wiles, thy falsehoods,—yet did I,
Contemplating her lovely eyes in thine,
While still she lived, give all my love to thee;
Not blindly so, but by the mere delight
In that so sweet resemblance overborne,
A bondage long and cruel to endure.

Now boast, and well thou mayest! Say, alone
Of all thy sex, 'twas thou to whom I stoop'd
A haughty head, to whom of mine own will
I gave a heart that ne'er had been subdued,
Say, that thou wast the first (and last, I hope!),
To see a suppliant homage in mine eyes,
To see me timid, trembling, and unmann'd,
(I burn and blush with shame to think of it),
To see me, breathless, watch thy every wish,
Thy every word, thy every act, grow pale
At thy imperious flouts, with traitor beam
At any trivial kindness, change in h
And mien as thy looks changed. T
The yoke fell with it shatter'd to gr
Therein I joy. And though my days f
Of heaviness, yet after such a time
Of bondage and of folly I embrace
Wisdom and liberty, and am content.
For though a life, of all affection void,
Void of all chivalrous delusions, be
Like to a winter night without a star,
Amends and balm sufficient for my fate
It is, that here, stretch'd careless on the grass,
I gaze on sea, and earth, and sky, and smile.

FOR THE SAKE OF THE COLLEGE.¹

I.

THE midday express from Berlin had just thundered into the central station of Cologne, and added a fresh swarm of perspiring travellers to the crowded platforms. From a second-class carriage stepped down a young man in a light suit, an obvious Englishman, ruddy of countenance, athletic in figure, clear-eyed, handsome, masterful. Handing his *gepäckschein* to a porter, he was on the point of striding away with a small wallet in his hand, as if no such thing as the thermometer at ninety degrees in the shade existed, when a timid touch stopped him.

"May I speak to you?" asked a young voice, in which tears lurked.

Richard Carter turned sharply round. A girl scarcely more than seventeen, obviously English too, was facing him with Irish eyes of entreaty and alarm.

"Yes; what can I do for you?" he inquired, smiling.

"I want to go to Wiesbaden—and I have missed my train—I was to have been met here, and—there is no one—and they told me to change, and I got out—and my ticket and my luggage and my money are all gone on—and——"

"You are in the deuce of a fix?"

"Yes," she repeated, wildly. "I am in the deuce of a fix."

Carter laughed. Such a pretty child she was, with rippling brown hair not yet "put up," but loosely tied with a cherry-coloured ribbon, eyes of a Celtic blue, flushed cheeks, and a sensitive mouth.

"I don't know a word of German," she began piteously.

"Well, it's no use crying, is it?" he interrupted, soothingly.

"And I knew you were English, so I—I——"

Carter laughed again, and his laughter was so infectious that the girl began to laugh too. For two minutes the pair surveyed each other, she thinking what a godlike Englishman he seemed amidst all these stout commercial travellers and supercilious Prussian officers; he, what a charming maiden this was to eyes which for six weeks had been sated with German femininity. And that settled it.

Telling her to wait, he walked off, counted his little stock of money carefully, made some inquiries, and returned. "It will be all right," he said briskly. "There is no train to Wiesbaden till 3.25. Let us have some lunch and see the cathedral. I'm sure you are starving."

"I am dying of thirst," she answered, in the most confiding

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way. "I would rather have something to drink than go to Wiesbaden."

"Then come along. One can drink a good deal in three hours."

Neither knew Cologne, but they easily found a delightful open-air restaurant in the Dom-Platz, where, snugly shaded from the pitiless sun, they got an interminable *mittagsessen*, with iced hock and seltzer galore; and by the time the meal was over she was hopelessly in love with him. Carter, to be sure, talked very little; but the girl prattled on unceasingly, for this clear-eyed Englishman with the masterful chin and mouth had a truly wonderful sympathy for a maid's troubles, and he encouraged her to confess as one to whom all the worries of youth were of absorbing interest. And she told him everything—how she was an orphan, how she had quarrelled with her aunt, how that aunt had packed her off to Wiesbaden to study music—"the only thing she was fit for"—how she meant to become a great pianist—a female Rubinstein, or, at least, a Madam Schumann—and how one day she would have her revenge in wealth and fame.

"I can do it," she wound up, with superbly girlish confidence.

"Oh yes," was his quiet answer. "Any man or woman, given the requisite talent, can always come out on the top if he or she will only work."

"I *will* work."

Carter stroked his moustache

as he surveyed her with fresh interest.

"Do you know what work really is, my dear young lady?" he asked, abruptly.

"Practising seven or eight hours a-day, I suppose," she answered, calmly.

"No, that's not work—that's drudgery. Work," he added, slowly, "is sacrificing everything—everything to your ideal."

The girl stared. Till now this Englishman had spoken so easily and carelessly, but a determined, almost bitter, tone, which inspired like a trumpet-call, rang out in that last sentence.

"Then I will sacrifice everything," she replied, pushing the hair out of her eyes. "I can—and I will."

"When you are a woman of five-and-twenty," he said, very gravely, "you will understand what sacrifice means and what it costs. I sincerely hope you will not learn it before that."

A question flew to her lips, but something in his face—a shadow, in her girl's imagination, of self-sacrifice haunted his clear eyes)—stifled the question.

They strolled to the cathedral. After the cruel glare without, how divinely cool it was beneath this mighty roof and these soaring arches. The grandeur and the grace, the delicacy and the strength, the space and the immensity of this incomparable building encompassed them about with the overpowering might of the ideal—the ideal realised in stone of countless generations who

had built with blood and tears and hope unquenchable to the greater glory of God and the human spirit which God had planted in immortal souls. After five minutes of aimless meandering, they both dropped into chairs and sat speechless, rapt in the vision of human ambitions.

But trains do not belong to the world of dreams. In the porch the girl turned to her companion. "You left that on your chair," she said, holding out a leather wallet. "Perhaps you would be sorry to lose it."

"Thank you," he answered with emotion,—"thank you so much."

"Is that your drudgery or your sacrifice?" she asked, lifting her face up to his with unconscious sauciness.

"It is both," he said, gravely; "the wallet is to do for me what the piano will do for you."

"Wealth and fame?"

"Fame, maybe, some day, but wealth—no—certainly not wealth."

She pondered on the answer until it was time to say good-bye, and then thanks he would not hear of, nor would he allow her to regard as a loan the twenty-mark piece which he pressed on her. "You can pay me back," he said, with his soothing smile, "when you are rich and famous."

"I will. It is a promise."

He nodded gaily. She will

be a lovely woman some day, was his thought as he studied her eloquent eyes, and slim figure, so rich in its promise of physical perfection to come with the gifts of womanhood.

"You have told me many things," he said, presently, "but you have not told me your name."

"Sybil Sanderson." She watched the effect anxiously, but he said nothing. "Do you not like it?" she asked, eagerly.

"Yes"—he tilted back his straw hat—"yes, but I like the owner better."

She was blushing to the roots of her hair with joy, but before she could find words to reply the train was steaming out of the station.

"I could adore him," the poor child kept whispering to the Rhine. "I am so glad I missed the train—and I *will* see him again."

And then she astonished her fellow-travellers by a sobbing laugh. Was it not silly? He knew her name, but she had quite forgotten to learn his. Meanwhile, Richard Carter in Cologne station was filling his pipe. "Well, well," he muttered, "it is lucky she was not five years older, or I must have gone to Wiesbaden and made a fool of myself."

And as often as that thought recurred on the journey back to England he struck the wallet, as if the fault lay there.

II.

In an oak-pannelled room, in the college of St Theresa, Oxford, Richard Carter, fellow and

tutor of that famous society, sat busy at a lecture. Through the open window filtered an

occasional whoop of an undergraduate, made all the more incongruous by the tender night air of June, so fragrant with the cool perfume of lilac, laburnum, and the budding may.

"Come in," he called over his shoulder, as the clock from the Tower toned out ten with its measured solemnity. "Come in."

A young man in a scholar's gown stood in the doorway—an awkward young man with a shock of ill-kempt hair, a shabby coat, and grey flannel trousers frayed at the edges and baggy at the knees.

Carter motioned him to a vacant arm-chair and began to light a pipe. "I wanted to see you particularly, Richardson," he began, "and you must permit me to speak quite confidentially."

The scholar twiddled his square cap nervously.

"The Warden tells me," Carter proceeded, "that you say you must take your Schools this term."

"Yes."

"Because you cannot afford to stay up a fourth year?"

"Yes, I cannot afford it. I have only my scholarship, and try as I will I cannot live on that even in diggings."

Carter smoked for two minutes. "You cannot get a first this year," he remarked, in a low voice.

"I know that. Therefore—I must be content with a second. It is time I began to earn——"

"Next year you would get the best first of the year, and a certain fellowship to follow."

Richardson flushed. "It is very good of you to say so, sir," he said, picking at the tassel of his cap.

"Oh! I am not flattering you, but what I said is, humanly speaking, a certainty."

"I am sorry I cannot stay up, if only to do you and the college credit, Mr Carter. But I cannot, I simply cannot. I am in debt already."

Carter pushed his hand through his hair. "We have no college funds available," he remarked. "Terry's, as you know, is not a rich college, and we have been badly hit by agricultural depression."

"The Warden has explained all that," Richardson answered, eagerly, "and I quite understand."

Carter took a turn up and down the room. "Would fifty pounds see you through?" he asked, wheeling suddenly round.

The scholar dropped his cap. "Fifty pounds!" he repeated, "I should think so, I should just think so." His eyes gleamed with intense fire.

"There you are, then," Carter put in, quietly. "No one will make a better use of it than you, I know."

The magic strip of pink paper fluttered out of the scholar's trembling fingers as he stared speechless and with tears in his eyes at the long rows of German books in the pannelled walls.

Carter put his hand on his shoulder. "Richardson," he said, in his soothing way, "you are not the first pupil whom an Oxford tutor has had the pleasure of helping over

a five-barred gate. You will take that cheque and use it for the sake of the college."

"But—but——"

"No 'buts' if you please. We are all here to help the college, some by teaching, some by winning 'firsts.' That cheque is simply an investment, and you will repay Terry's by getting your fellowship."

He led him to the door. "Good night," he said, cheerfully; "remember, please, this is simply a little affair between you and me, and we will never speak of it again. Terry's will get the best 'first' this year in Hopkins, and next year it will be Richardson. Shake hands on it."

What went into that hand-grip only a tutor and a scholar's heart knew, a tutor and a scholar to whom the honour of an Oxford college was the dearest thing on earth.

When the stumbling ill-shod feet had ceased to sound on the creaking stairs Carter

went back to his writing-table. "Thank God! that's over," he muttered, "and he took it like the brick he is."

He began to rummage in a leather wallet for some notes. "Work," the fragrant night air suddenly whispered, "work is sacrificing everything to your ideal." Carter put his pen down and drew his pass-book from a drawer. Fifty pounds made an ugly hole in the slender balance. It is just as well, he thought with a grim smile, that I have made Germany impossible this year. Wiesbaden would not suit 'A History of European Thought' at all, at all.

Then he thrust the vellum volume away, and both it and Richardson were speedily blotted out in the labyrinths of Hegel and Fichte. Nothing but the perfume of the famous lilacs of St Theresa's filled the silent room, St Theresa's for the sake of whose honour and glory he had deprived himself of his holiday.

III.

Yet that was not the only interview Carter had that evening. Midnight had just begun to reverberate from the Tower when a colleague entered. "I have seen the Warden," he said, flinging himself without ceremony into an arm-chair, "and he agrees reluctantly. The motion will come on in your name."

Carter shut the German books with a slap of relief. "That's all right," he said, triumphantly.

The man in the chair took up one book after another. "It's awfully good of you to make the suggestion," he said, at last, "and it will be carried without a doubt. For most of us it doesn't matter a straw, but for you in particular I must say it is a fine sacrifice."

"Oh! I don't deny the sacrifice," was the calm reply; "still, the new laboratory we must have, if Terry's is to keep its place. We can't go to the Warden again; last year he

gave us £2000 towards restoring the pinnacles, the year before he guaranteed the Prize Fellowship: it is time some of the sacrifice fell on other shoulders. With all this con-founded drainage expenditure the Board of Agriculture wouldn't sanction any more capital loans. Therefore we must dock the fellowships. *Voilà tout.*"

"I know, I know," the other replied. "To those of us who have private means it's a trifle; but to cut off £30 a-year from you, and Mercer, and Macready, who haven't a stiver but what you earn, it's another affair. It's uncommonly handsome, and we all feel it so."

"The laboratory we must have," Carter repeated, calmly. "That's why we, the juniors, whom it affects most, are making the proposal. I am only glad to think it will be carried now."

"Without a doubt. Mercer and you, in fact, have got us out of the devil of a hole!"

"We are doing it for the sake of the college," Carter interjected quietly. "Dash it all, Johnson, you would do the same in my place!"

"I hope so. But that doesn't make it less of a sacrifice. 'Pon my soul, I can't make out how you and Mercer manage to live."

"In luxury, of course," Carter laughed, "as the visitors think who walk round the front quad and go away with the firm idea we are all blooming plutocrats. The deception must be kept up for — the sake of the college, eh?"

"Must it? I should like to ram it down the throat of every blessed one of them that this magnificent and successful tutor has, what shall we say, three hundred pounds per annum."

"Well, a man can write epoch-making books on that, if he has no more."

"So they say. But marriage, my dear boy, what about marriage?"

Carter shrugged his shoulders. "Those who want to marry must go elsewhere," he answered. "There are richer colleges than Terry's, and there is always Fleet Street."

"In other words, celibacy is one of the sacrifices which must be endured for the sake of the college. That's devilish hard!"

"On the women?" Carter questioned, smiling.

"Yes; on the women. A woman has the right to marry her man, and ought not to be prevented because he has tied himself to a college which cannot afford to pay him properly."

Carter pushed the books at his elbow impatiently. "It's too late to argue that now," he replied. "But I don't agree. We men who join colleges like Terry's make our beds with our eyes open. We can't allow the women to interfere with what we owe to the college and the life we have deliberately chosen."

"H'm! I wonder if you will always think so. Even for the sake of the college sacrifice can be carried too far, and to my thinking the women, poor innocents, occasionally furnish just the crucial test."

"When the test comes,"

Carter laughed, "I presume even a junior can deal with it."

"I wouldn't be too sure even of that."

Carter put his arm into Johnson's. "Marriage be blowed!" he said, gaily. "Let's have ten minutes with the bats before turning in."

The lights had all been extinguished. The undergraduates had ceased to whoop, and the pair strolled in silence in that jealously secluded Fellows' garden which was one of the hidden glories of Oxford. The June stars shone bright and clear in the blue-black vault of heaven; the night air fanned them with wings ambrosial of lilac and the May; the ghostly towers and pinnacles slept lapped in the caresses of the moon.

"It is amazing," Johnson remarked, as he listened to the whispers of the creeper on the chapel walls,—“it is amazing what a tremendous allegiance a place like this can exact from the most carnal of us. The democracy one day will put it down as sheer diabolical witchcraft.”

"Not it: the allegiance is worth the sacrifice, and the democracy has the right to demand sacrifice from the useless pedant."

Johnson grunted, and left him to pace the dewy grass alone. And it was so good to be alone with the spirit of the place. Yet Carter was no monk by nature, still less a misogynist. He was simply a healthy Englishman, to whom God had given a fine brain and an iron will, an Englishman

with his fleshly ambitions and passions as most men, one in whom the voices of revolt more often than he liked cried out fiercely. You are a fool, they said; you should have taken your talents as others did and sold them in the dearest market. Why stay in this medieval monastery, a simple tutor, working harder than the careless world imagines flesh and blood can work, and earning what the careless world rightly regards as a wretched pittance? And for what reason?—to write a book which only a mere handful of men as deluded as himself could appreciate? to teach a number of young men, who showed their gratitude by turning their backs on the place as soon as they had learned all a tutor had to offer? And the only answer he could plead was that Oxford and his college had in their mysterious omnipotence drugged his being with the conception of an ideal—the ideal of self-devotion, of abandoning everything to making his college the best and first in the whole university, to making his own intellectual life and his character worthy of being a fit instrument to that end. Fool! poor fool! cried the voices; the ideal is impossible—an idle dream begotten of a mutilated and selfish theory of human life.

Was it? Was it? He stared at the towers and that chapel wall on whose stained glass windows the moonlight rested as it had rested for five hundred years. Yes, the voices of revolt were voices of temptation, and

they were wrong. No power, no wealth, no woman could ever be to him, could ever make him, what Oxford and St Theresa's had been to him and had made him; no woman could ever satisfy the cravings of intellect and spirit which his life here would satisfy, if only he would be true to his ideal. And through sacrifice he could, he would, make the ideal a power fruitful of reward to himself and to others.

He locked the garden-gate behind him triumphantly, and paused for one more look at the beauty which always won in the end. The creepers on the chapel wall rustled and crinkled. "Sybil Sanderson—Sybil Sanderson" they whispered with eerie mischief. Carter laughed as he shook his fist at the windows. "You are wrong," he muttered; "not even that pretty child in her white frock could make a mess of my life."

The next day at the college meeting the proposal to erect

the new laboratory by taking thirty pounds a-year for ten years from the fellowships was carried unanimously. And the newspapers which chronicled with the approval of small print that an Oxford college was actually waking up and beginning to march with the modern spirit to the tune of Science had nothing to say of the sacrifice which lay behind the bare announcement. Obsolete medievalism is in fact too proud to publish to the world how it does these things; nor would the readers in the suburban trains have lifted their eyes from the cricket column had they been told that the new laboratory meant depriving a humble college tutor of his holiday in Germany. All the more fool he, would have been at best their criticism, the unanswerable criticism of common-sense. And what is education and a university in a nation worth if they are not based on common-sense?

IV.

A year later, in the sitting-room of a small *pension* at Weimar, Miss Sybil Sanderson, who was practising vigorously, was interrupted by the servant laying coffee for three. She shut the piano with an angry slam. "I forgot," she muttered, "that to-day that beastly Englishman arrives. It is just like Frau Bredow to leave me alone to welcome him—a brute who will say my music interrupts his work. Well, he shall have his coffee by himself to-day."

And he did. Worse, when

she returned Frau Bredow was still "from house," and "the brute" was actually smoking a cigar in the balcony, with a pile of her music in his lap.

She marched in to let him know what she thought of this impertinence.

"Good gracious!" She came to a dead standstill in the centre of the room.

"This is indeed a pleasant surprise," Carter remarked, smiling; "so pleasant, that I have been enjoying my discovery"—he waved the tell-

tale music—"in the only fit way a man can."

She took his hand mechanically, the colour still flooding her cheeks.

Four years apparently had not altered him one whit. Straw hat, light suit, athletic figure, clear eyes, resolute mouth—all were just as she had seen him at Cologne, and so often in her dreams. But his thought was very different. "By Jove!" he had gasped as she floated into the room; for the slim child of seventeen had blossomed into a woman, whose white dress caressed a figure in which the unconscious grace of girlhood and the dignity of womanhood were linked by a subtle magic. In the shy Irish eyes lurked a strange pathos—was it ambition, or music, or passion? round the sensitive mouth roguery fought with determination, and had the best of it. What an entrancing vision of a daughter of Eve Satan had conjured up for a man who had renounced women for the sake of the college!

They sat in the balcony and talked of stupid things—the September heat, the railway, the German tongue—while Carter studied her line by line; and by degrees his trained sympathy wore her shyness away.

"May I ask what brings you to Weimar, of all places?" she asked suddenly, and dropped her eyes, as one who should supply the proper answer.

"I am writing a book," was the disappointing reply, "and I came to read some manuscripts here."

"What is the book about?"

He smiled at her frank curiosity.

"It is a history, madam," he said, "of European thought from the death of Kant; and I hope to publish the first volume in the autumn."

She flashed a glance—yes—he was not quite the same. And that book, written in his features, added an indefinable distinction, a mysterious attraction, to what every woman would have called a handsome face.

"Frau Bredow told me you were an Oxford Don," she remarked, archly. "She says they write very dull books, which they steal from the Germans, and spoil in the stealing."

"Frau Bredow is quite right."

She began to play with the bangle on her wrist.

"The beginning of it was in that wallet, was it not?" she asked, with a gleam of mischief.

"Exactly. Such a dull beginning, too. What a splendid memory you have!"

"Then you had forgotten that day in Cologne?" she demanded, very slowly.

Carter deliberately paused to knock the ash off his cigar.

"Yes," he answered, "yes." It was a lie—the first lie he had ever uttered for the sake of the college. Would it be the last? "Dons who write books are always forgetful as well as dull," he added, smiling; but, to his amazement, she was gone.

The cigar flew in an angry circle over the balcony. For

the moment he felt quite dizzy. "I wish to God I had never come to Weimar!" he murmured, savagely.

But at supper both had recovered, and later she played to him Bach and Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin, and Brahms.

"So you really like music?" she asked on the balcony, while Frau Bredow in despair took refuge in a nap on the sofa.

"It is the one thing that makes life worth living," he answered.

"I am so glad to hear you say that," she said, with a tremble in her voice. "We could never be friends if my music meant nothing to you."

"I have heard all the famous pianists," Carter added, "and you are going to be amongst them."

"You really mean that?"

"When you know me better you will find I never flatter, not even a young lady. You have worked very hard since we met at Cologne."

"Yes, I have worked like a black, or a Don, because I had a sovereign remedy for laziness." Her smile was absolutely irresistible as she slipped a bangle from her wrist. "There is my spur," she said, "and it has never failed."

It was only a twenty-mark piece fastened to the circlet of gold—the gift of an Englishman to a child of seventeen.

"I see," he said, slowly, and for the second time that day he felt quite dizzy.

"Do you remember telling me," she asked, "that work means sacrificing everything to

your ideal. That is true—so true. But I am a woman now, and I find the sacrifice costs—nothing."

Her glance was a challenge, —the challenge of the child, not of the woman; and before his searching scrutiny her eyes dropped, her bosom rose and fell.

"I hope you will always find that," he answered.

"I mean to. Good night."

Alone with the September stars, Carter failed to banish the aroma of her presence. The provoking frou-frou of her dress fluttered in the rings of the smoke of his cigar; the shy homage in her eyes, the poise of her head, the witchery of her smile, mingled with the passion of that Chopin scherzo, with the unfathomable storm and restraint of that Waldstein sonata which she had interpreted with insight extraordinary for a girl. And while he was striving to analyse his own feelings, she had gone straight to the heart of the matter. "He only likes his book," she remarked to her mirror, "and, perhaps, my music a little. But he shall like *me*—*he shall*."

Frau Bredow washed her hands promptly of them both—the man, she said, had surely taken leave of his senses. Every day from nine till five he toiled like a professor remorselessly in the Library; and every day, wet or fine, he took Miss Sanderson out for a walk after coffee, as if he were a sentimental student, and she a mere shop-girl. Herr Gott! these terrible English! And they actually told her what they talked about—Goethe and

Schiller, Hegel and Liszt, Mendelssohn and Ibsen and Nietzsche, and French novelists of whose names a proper young woman should never have heard. Nay, more, when she dared to protest, Sybil flung Goethe in her face. As if any Englishman had the right in Weimar to make the German Goethe his model and his excuse. Yet Goethe seemed to have taught both uncommonly well; for not even in the palmiest days of the eighteenth century had those Grand-ducal gardens heard such delighted talk of the things of the spirit made human by the interest of a man and a woman in each other as they heard in that strange September fortnight.

On the day on which Carter had to leave good news came for him. Richardson, who had got his "first" in July, had gained the Merton fellowship. Sybil found him surrounded by his luggage with the telegram in his hand.

"I believe," she said, half angrily, "you think more of that miserable fellowship than if the 'History of European

Thought' were to be crowned by the Academy."

"Well, you see it means something more achieved for the sake of the college."

"I hate Mr Richardson," she said, bluntly.

"Oh, poor chap! he only wants what you want, fame and wealth."

"Then it is the college I hate, an ogre which makes its men do what they do not wish to do."

"Exactly. Is it not taking me home when——" He stopped, stabbed with remorse, for she was gazing at him with caught breath.

"But you will come back some day?" she tried to say lightly.

Carter straightened himself. "Miss Sanderson," he said, firmly, "I have had a magnificent holiday, and now we must both return to our work—you to yours, and I to mine."

"Then you will not come back?"

"You must not ask me. I cannot."

Frau Bredow came in, and he promptly went his way.

V.

Nevertheless he did return next September, this time for one day only. During twelve wretched months he had wrestled with himself. He had treated her like a brute, and he owed it to her to explain. That was his plea, the real reason being of course that he must see her again—just once.

Frau Bredow was not in-

formed. He wrote from Berlin, and they met in the Grand-ducal gardens.

She wore the coolest of cool brown hollands, which she had guessed was his favourite dress, because it suited her better than anything else. And the bangle on her wrist jingled with joy. He had come back, which she had not dared to hope.

"Fame is yours," she smiled,

as they found the old nook. "The book has been a great success."

"You have read it?"

"Every word, more than once. It is splendid. A professor from Jena told me it was the most masterly thing which has been written for thirty years, and he could not have believed an Englishman could have done it. He is longing, as I am, for volume two."

Carter poked at the path with his stick. "I am glad you are pleased," he said. "The college that you hate is more than pleased too. That volume cost me a great deal, and—volume two will cost me more, much more."

"You——" She plucked a leaf, nervously.

"Were it not for the book and the life that the book exacts I would have asked you to marry me."

There was dead silence.

"I have behaved very badly, Sybil," he said, in a shamed voice; "but I have told you the truth at last."

"But—but," she whispered, "cannot you take me and the book too? I—oh! how can I live without you?"

"It is impossible."

"I do not understand."

"Sybil, I am a poor man, a very poor man. If I were to marry you I should have to give up not only the book, but all the ideals of my life as a tutor of St Theresa's. I should have to spend my life making an income to keep us both, and I can't do it. I simply can't."

"Is not that very selfish?"

"Yes, it is selfish, vilely selfish. But years ago I vowed, no matter what the temptation might be, to live up to an ideal. It is so hard to explain to a woman what a tutor's ideal can be, what it must cost him. Be generous and brave, Sybil, and promise to forget me."

"I can understand the ideals," she said, "but why did you teach me to love you?"

"If I did that I was mad and wicked. I thought, too, I was stronger than I was. I did not see my mistake until——until——"

"You had broken my heart."

"I will not deny it. Nothing that you can say is too hard. I only ask you now to wipe my worthless conduct from your memory."

"It is too late. Forget! O God!" she stretched out her arms. "You are sacrificing me, the woman," she whispered, "to your college and your book—me to your ideals. Have you no pity?"

But he had no answer.

"If it is only money," she began, eagerly, "why not wait? in a year I shall be out, and I shall succeed. I will make money, and you can finish your book with me to help you."

"Do you think any man worth twopence would marry you on those terms?"

"Why not, if he loves me and I love him?"

"It would be ruin to both of us. The ideals would be shattered," he said, remorselessly, "the book would be worthless, and you, the woman who has ideals too, you would

become—God knows what you would become.”

“I do not care,” she cried, with passion, “what I would become. To a woman the love of the man she loves is worth all the ideals and all the colleges in the world.”

He took her hand. “That, my dear,” he said, quietly, “is where a woman is so wrong. When the ideals had been shattered the love would be shattered too.”

“It is not true. I will not believe it.”

“Yes, it is true. And this I do know, that without my book and my ideals I would not be worth the love of a woman such as you are. And without your ideals, the ideals of the great artist, you would only be fit to keep a commonplace husband’s nursery. By the living God! you shall not be that if I can help it.”

“Then you never loved me,” she said, fiercely; “it is only the

college and your book that you love, and the woman must suffer as always.”

“No, no,” he answered, wearily. “It is because I loved you and love you still that I have come to say Good-bye.”

She looked up with a wan smile. “Cruel,” she said, helplessly,—“cruel because you are so strong.”

“Strong!”

“Yes; you love me and I love you, and yet you can break my heart and your own for the sake of the college. It is useless to tell you what I feel, what I could be to you. You must go—you shall. But stay with me, Dick, stay just a little longer; tell me of yourself and your life that I am not to share, and then go—yes, go for ever.”

So he stayed till the sun was set, and the midnight express took him back to St Theresa’s, which surely now had won him for her own.

VI.

Three years passed. Volume Two came out, and all the critics agreed it was better than volume one. And if it did not bring its author wealth it brought him such fame as ‘A History of European Thought’ can bring. At thirty-seven Richard Carter became a considerable figure in that jealously guarded realm of Learning which is also Literature, one who bade fair to found a school of his own in his university, and what greater achievement can an Oxford tutor hope to accomplish than that?

One trifle alone puzzled the

curious. Volume Two had for its dedication the baffling words, “To S. S.,” and no one in Oxford or elsewhere had penetrated the secret which they clearly suggested. When the audacious had tried and been routed from the room with crushing politeness, Carter would open a drawer and take out a scrap of paper. At the top was written, in his own hand, a sentence from Renan: “I only know of one vocation for a man, and that is to realise the ideal of his nature. . . . What honest man would not approve and respect me for sacrificing to my

conscience the greatest happiness of my life?" And below, in a woman's writing, were these words: "Your dedication made me cry for pride. Thank you so much, for the book is better than even *I* had hoped. And it is my book too, is it not?—S. S."

Now it happened that one June evening, in that summer term three years later, Carter might have been found in the outer drawing-room at the Warden's Lodgings, along with some fifty gentlemen and ladies. He had come at the command of Mrs Matheson, because he always accepted her invitations, and always refused those of every one else,—“for the sake of the college,” he would say grimly to himself as he fastened his tie.

“It is quite a reception,” he remarked, reproachfully, to that Roman matron, his hostess. “You should have warned me.”

“It is my daughter's fault,” she answered, benignly. “You will find the music of which I spoke in the other room, and you will not be disappointed.”

The familiar rapid chords of the opening movement of the Waldstein sonata struck on his ear as he paused in the doorway. Mrs Matheson was right: young lady the player might be, but she was no drawing-room amateur. He waited until the sonata was finished, then, unnoticed, slipped through the window into the garden.

“Good God!” he muttered, as he sank into a chair under the cedar and mopped his brow.

Through the window came

the divine cadences and tender lullaby of the melody of Chopin's Ballade in A Flat. Carter buried his face in his hands, striving to obliterate it from his hearing. The one thing against which he had prayed for three years had happened at last.

“Dick,” said a gentle voice, —“Dick, will you not speak to me?”

He tottered to his feet. Sybil was in front of him, a soft white cloak about her shoulders. The fragrance of the dying lilac and of the budding may, laden with those passionate chords of Chopin, encompassed her and him.

“I saw you,” she said, so simply, “and I followed when I could—for I want your advice.”

He found courage to look at her, but he could say nothing.

“Yes, your advice,” she repeated. “Come with me down the garden, and I will tell you.”

He obeyed as in a dream. Her white dress rustled beside him on the dewy grass; the soft folds of her cloak brushed against his arm.

“I have been here a week,” she said, composedly, “a whole week, and you never guessed.” The witchery of her smile was more triumphant than ever. “Lotty Matheson, whom I met in Vienna, asked me to visit Oxford, and I accepted, because I wanted above all to see the college—your college.”

Carter tugged at his collar, which had become chokingly tight.

“After I left Weimar I studied under Leczitski,” she proceeded, “and he brought

me out. Fame is mine now, and wealth will be mine very soon. That star"—she touched the diamonds in her coronal of rippling hair—"was given me by the Emperor of Austria, and that"—she held up the gold bangle—"by the author of the 'History of European Thought.'"

"Don't," he said, brokenly, "don't!"

She put a hand on his arm. "Do you know," she said, "your hair is touched with grey, and I like it. You look better than any of the men here to-night—for your ideal is in your face, and that makes me happier than I can say."

"And you,"—he turned and surveyed her. Beautiful, incomparably beautiful, of course she was. But, thank God! it was the face of a beautiful woman into which had passed the music that was her life.

"I have learned so much in this week," she was saying. "At last I understand what St Theresa's is to you and you are to St Theresa's. They are proud of you here: proud is not the word—they worship you. To-day an undergraduate told me that without you Terry's would go to pieces, and," she paused, "one of your pupils not long ago confessed to me what I dare not repeat. Yes, I understand it all now."

Can there be anything more sweetly caressing than the voice of fame in a beautiful woman's mouth—a woman whom you have loved and still love?

Sybil threw back her cloak

and looked about her—at the grey garden-wall on which the creepers rustled under the flowing chestnuts, at the may-scenting the summer night, the crocketed pinnacles of the quadrangles on which the moonlight slept, at the Gateway Tower, guardian of so many secrets of the human spirit stored through the travail of the generations within these cloistered precincts.

"You were right, Dick," she said, slowly; "no woman is worth the sacrifice of all that. A man can make it his own, his very own, as he can make no woman."

He made no reply, for he was trying to convince himself she spoke the truth.

She found a seat under one of the chestnuts. "It is a very simple matter," she said, "and you will tell me what I must do. A man whom I like has asked me to marry him."

He sat down beside her and stared at the grass.

"Some day he will be rich and powerful," she added, "and——"

"And you?" he interjected, with sharp passion.

"Love him? Oh no, I cannot love any man now."

"Sybil!" He caught at her hand, and she rose at once.

"No, Dick," she said, "you shall not say it—you do not mean it—and—and—I do not love you any longer."

"Sybil!"

"Forgive me for having come to you. It was cruel; but I had to tell you somehow. And now you will go

—go and finish your life alone, and leave me to finish mine, as we agreed at Weimar was best for both.”

She put her hands on his shoulders and kissed him very gently on the forehead. “Oh! my dear,” she whispered, “you cannot turn back now. You have done great things, and, please God, you shall do greater, much greater, for my sake and the sake of the college.”

For one long moment he stood looking into her eyes, and then without a word he let himself out by the private gate into the lonely Fellows’ quad.

Sybil continued to sit under the chestnuts until she was interrupted. “I had to do it,” she muttered, as she rose to meet a man who came towards her from the drawing-room. “And it is the college which will give him his answer.”

VII.

Next morning found Carter pondering on a letter, a confidential letter, virtually offering him a professorship in a Scottish university, if only he would consent to be a candidate for the vacancy. And the post was worth nine hundred a-year. For half an hour he paced up and down, passing his hand through the fair hair prematurely touched with grey. Then with sharp resolution he sat down and wrote two letters.

A tap at the door. Richardson stood in the room, but what a changed Richardson! Carter almost laughed when he recalled the shabby coat and baggy frayed trousers of his former pupil, for here was an alert young man of seven-and-twenty, whose faultless blue serge, dainty tie, and polished boots brought into the scholar’s study the finished air of the great world.

“I was at the Warden’s last night,” Richardson remarked, “and I looked for you everywhere, but——”

“I am sorry,” Carter interposed, awkwardly, “I was

obliged to come away earlier than I had expected.”

Richardson smiled at the proofs. “Volume Three, I suppose?” he said lightly.

“Yes, volume Three.” Was it not the truth?

They chatted for half an hour. Richardson had so much to tell, and he told it with a grateful admiration for his old tutor glowing in his keen eyes.

“Do you remember advising me to make a special study in Germany of economics?” he asked, with a delighted laugh. “Well, I did it, and the result is that I have just been appointed secretary to the millionaire head of an American syndicate, and if I don’t make my fortune now, it will not be your fault.”

Carter congratulated him with genuine sincerity. Was it not right that a Terry’s man should help to control the realms of international finance, as Terry’s men, the powers unknown to the public behind the throne, guided the ship of state and the destinies of the Empire?

“I have been a relapsed heretic from the first,” Richard-

son explained, smiling. "Oxford can make you a great thinker and teacher, but it cannot satisfy the humbler ambitions of money and power, and I am a prey to them." Carter laughed at the confession, which his ablest pupils every year taught him to expect. "It is just as well," he said, "that we don't all want to write the 'History of European Thought.'"

"None the less," Richardson replied, with conviction, "it is the Dons who have chosen the finer part, for without them we others would be impossible. And I—I in particular owe all to one who might have been a Prime Minister had he chosen. It was that fifty pounds which did it, and, believe me, I am grateful."

Carter took the outstretched hand. "That is our best reward," he said, simply. "All of us here want Terry's men to be first everywhere. And if our pupils, whatever post they fill, put the college first, they have more than learned the lesson we try to teach them."

"We should be curs if we did not do more than that," Richardson replied. "The more I see of the world, the more I discover that it is a man's life and his ideals, not his teaching, which can achieve the impossible in others."

"Thank you," said Carter, "thank you very much for saying that. So often we teachers up here are filled with black despair. We need to be convinced again and again that we are not wasting our time and such talents as we have in

selfish pedantry and obsolete medievalism."

"Wasting!" Richardson cried, with indignation.

Whereupon they began to talk of other things—of the book, and, above all, of Terry's men carrying, as the Jesuits in the sixteenth century carried, a unique faith in their Society into the uttermost parts of the earth, and always remembering with reverent gratitude the rock whence they were hewn.

"Can you guess," Richardson remarked as he said goodbye, "what made me give up Oxford and the tutor's career which as an undergraduate I had hoped to lead?"

"The reason," Carter said, smiling, "was or is a woman."

"Now, how could you guess that?" Richardson demanded, blushing.

"My dear Richardson, we Dons are not men of the world; but we do know this, that when a young man with brains and no money turns his back on Oxford, it begins with ambition and it ends with a woman."

"Then you will not be surprised to hear I am engaged to be married?"

"Not a bit. Who is the fortunate lady?"

"Her name is Sybil Sanderson, and she is a great pianist. I met her first at Weimar, when I was studying economics by your advice. Last night she promised to marry me. You see everything good comes to me from Terry's or you."

In his radiance he had not noticed how heavily Carter leaned against the door, nor how the lines out in his face

by the great book suddenly deepened.

"And I must tell you one thing more," he rattled on. "At Vienna I asked her to be my wife, and she said she would give me her answer at Oxford. Women are so strange, aren't they?"

"I suppose they are, but I am scarcely an authority."

"Well, they don't come much into European thought, either before or after Kant." Richardson bubbled over with his joke and his good fortune.

"I am not so sure about that," Carter replied, very gravely.

"You mean they can inspire thought if they cannot produce it themselves?"

"Exactly."

"And, would you believe it," Richardson added, "that last night, when she said Yes, she told me she was marrying me for the sake of the college?"

"Good God!"

"Wasn't it an extraordinary thing for a woman to say who had never seen Oxford till a week ago, and who knows nothing about Terry's except what I have told her?"

Carter's reply was long in coming. "For all that," he said at last, "I think Miss Sanderson was probably quite right. She clearly means to make a great man of you, and I am sure she will succeed."

"I should like her to succeed," Richardson answered, with emotion, "for your sake. Do not I owe my wife as well as my career to you?"

Half an hour later Carter's servant found him still staring at the panneling and the impressive rows of German books.

"Shall I take these letters to the post, sir?" he asked.

Carter started. They were the two which he had written that morning.

"No," he said, wearily. "They can wait."

The servant slipped out, and Carter promptly tore the letters in pieces. One of them had been to announce his candidature for the Scottish Chair; the other was to Miss Sybil Sanderson, telling her how he had decided to leave Oxford, and imploring her to see him once again before she gave her answer to that other man.

Then he turned to his proofs.

In the autumn the Third volume of 'A History of European Thought' appeared—in time for Sybil Richardson to read it on her honeymoon. Perhaps she alone, of all the critics who agreed that the last instalment completely eclipsed the first two in brilliance of style and mastery of the subject, really appreciated the full meaning of the inscription on the title-page. For the author had dedicated his work, not to "S. S.," but to "The Warden, Fellows, and Scholars—past, present, and to come—of the College of St Theresa in the University of Oxford, for whose sake I began this book, and within whose walls I hope to die."

WYMOND CAREY.

THE SIEGE OF CALCUTTA.

THE siege and capture of Fort William at Calcutta and the dismal catastrophe that followed is one of the most dramatic incidents in the history of the British dominion in India. It is a record of misfortune, but of misfortune which did no dishonour to those who sank under it. The dastardly flight of the Governor and a few of the garrison has, however, left a false impression, which owes its wide diffusion to the engaging clearness of Macaulay's style. Almost the best known passage in his works is the relation of the fate of the captives who were confined in the Black Hole: "Nothing in history or fiction, not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, after he had wiped his bloody lips on the scalp of his murderers, approaches the horrors which were recounted by the few survivors of that night." The account of the siege itself which Macaulay has given is, however, so brief as to be mischievous in effect, with a mixture of fact and fiction, and a characteristic dexterity of phrase. He writes: "The Governor, who had heard much of Surajah Dowlah's cruelty, was frightened out of his wits, jumped into a boat, and took refuge in the nearest ship. The military commandant thought that he could not do better than follow so good an example. The fort was taken after a feeble resistance; and great numbers of the English fell into the hands of the conqueror." The Governor, it is true, jumped into a boat and took refuge in the nearest ship, the military commandant followed his example, but the fort was not taken after a feeble resistance. It surrendered after a gallant defence, lasting some days. The materials lay before Macaulay for an accurate narrative of the siege had he cared to use them; and it is a pity that he did not, for no one could have done better justice to the subject. They are to be found in the stately pages of Orme, from whom he borrowed his famous description of what took place in the Black Hole on a sultry night in June 1756. Orme writes: "It was the hottest season of the year, and the night uncommonly sultry even at this season." Macaulay's transformation is characteristic: "It was the summer solstice, the season when the fiery heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to natives of England by lofty halls and by the constant waving of fans." The second volume of Orme's classic deals with the important and interesting period of the history of our Indian Empire from "the calamity which befell the English settlements in 1756 to the peace of 1763." The author had resided in Calcutta for eleven years before the catastrophe occurred, and was able to describe the fort and environs from personal knowledge and observation. He also made free use of the

narratives and other writings of those engaged in the defence of Fort William. They form a part of the collection of historical material which he bequeathed to the East India Company. These narratives are signally curious and interesting, and have been too long allowed to rest undisturbed on the shelves of the India Office. They contain the spirit of the time, and bring us face to face with the chief actors in a tragedy which aroused the attention of Europe. They enable us to really understand not only what took place, but what causes led to the siege of Calcutta. Burke, in his speech on opening the Impeachment of Warren Hastings, said Suraja Dowlah "undertook (from motives which the House of Commons, with all their industry to discover the circumstance, have found it difficult to make out) to attack a little miserable trading fort that we had erected in Calcutta." Burke was alluding to the Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons on the 13th of April 1772, to inquire into "the nature, state, and condition of the East India Company." They examined some of the Company's servants who were in Bengal at the time, and read a few of the consultations and letters, and their report shows they had a suspicion of the real causes which brought on the loss of Calcutta. Seven years after the publication of the Report of the Select Committee, appeared in two

parts Orme's second volume. Every one who has followed the track of Orme through different parts of his work, who has read his authorities with constant reference to his pages, must be struck with the accuracy and fidelity of the historian as to his facts. But his inferences are of course at times liable to exception. This is especially the case in his account of the calamity which befell the English settlement. He had held high office in India—and he writes with official reticence. He omits materials for forming a fair judgment as to the causes which led to the siege; he enhances the errors and crimes of Suraja Dowlah, and suppresses facts which bear upon individual character. When Orme wrote many who took part in the siege were still alive, and the embers of controversy and passion still glowed. But a hundred and fifty years have gone on, and we are now able to review the history of the event in a calmer temper. At this time, when the Viceroy of India is about to unveil a monument "to the memory of those who were suffocated in the Black Hole Prison of Fort William," it may not be uninteresting to tell again, from a large amount of unpublished material, the story of the siege of Calcutta, and of the great and eventful catastrophe which stirred the hearts of Europe as the massacre of Cawnpore did a century later. The tale has often been related, but the whole real story has been left untold.¹

¹ A short, interesting, and accurate account of the siege is to be found under the disguise of fiction in the novel, 'Like Another Helen,' by Sydney C. Grier.

It has been argued that it would be wiser to let that "great crime" fall under the shadow of the great power oblivion. But that mad debauch of revenge and cruelty cannot be effaced from the page of history. The original monument was not erected in a spirit of hate and vainglory, but by "a fellow-sufferer" to the memory of his gallant comrades. It was well deserved, yet it was allowed to fall into ruin, and it disappeared some eighty-two years ago. It has been rebuilt by Lord Curzon at his own cost. The old tablet which bore the names of the principal sufferers stated it was erected to the memory "of sundry other Inhabitants, Military and Militia." It therefore commemorates not only the indomitable spirit with which, outnumbered and abandoned, a few Englishmen held their post, but also the courage with which they were seconded by men of different races and colour alike. It will remind Englishmen through what tribulation and adversity they have won the headship of a united India, and it will bid them remember that we can only make firm the foundations of our power by maintaining the goodwill and devotion of all our fellow-subjects.

The settlement which Job Charnock formed¹ was improved by degrees into a valuable possession. The English began to build walls and bastions round their factory, and so created the original citadel of Fort William. Under

the protection of the English flag and of English law, a large population of native and foreign traders settled on the Company's estate, and Calcutta became not a miserable trading fort, as Burke described it, but a prosperous town, a mart and seaport of considerable importance. In the year 1716 the English obtained from the Moghul an important firman or imperial order, "That all their mercantile affairs, together with their *gomashitas* [agents], have free liberty, in all *subahships* [provinces], to pass and repass to and fro, either by land or water, in any part or district through the several provinces above said. And know, they are custom free; that they have full power and liberty to buy and sell at their own pleasure." The liberty was abused by the servants of the Company. Captain Rennie, a mariner, in his 'Reflections on the Loss of Calcutta' (June 1756), states:—

"The injustice to the Moors consists in that, being by their courtesy permitted to live here as merchants, to protect and judge what natives were their servants, and to trade custom free,—we under that pretence protected all the Nabob's subjects that claimed our protection, though they were neither our servants nor our merchants, and gave our *dusticks* or passes to numbers of natives to trade custom free, to the great prejudice of the Nabob's revenue; nay more, we levied large duties upon goods brought into our districts from the very people that permitted us to trade custom free, and by numbers of their impositions (framed to raise the Company's revenues, some of which were ruinous to ourselves)—such as taxes on marriages, provisions trans-

¹ See 'Magu' for June 1902.

ferring land property, &c. — caused eternal clamour and complaints against us at Court."

In 1742 Aliverdi Khan, an Afghan adventurer, won for himself by the sword the rulership of Bengal. He was a good soldier and a strong administrator. He maintained friendly relations with the authorities of the European factories, and in return for the subsidies which he exacted from them, he gave them protection and enforced good order. At the close of his long reign he, however, regarded with suspicion the strong indomitable race whose ships commanded the sea and whose forts protected their rising settlements. When his chief commanders urged him to expel the English and seize their property he said, "It is now difficult to extinguish the fire on land; but should the sea be in flames, who could put them out?" Three years before his death Aliverdi Khan, who was stricken in age, appointed his favourite nephew and adopted son, Mirza Mahmud, to be his successor, and invested him with considerable power. On his appointment Mirza Mahmud received the name of Chiragee-al-Dowla, signifying "the Lamp of Riches," by which he was afterwards called; but by the Europeans Suraja Dowlah. Richard Becher, chief of the subordinate factory at Dacca, describes him as "a young man, violent, passionate, of great ambition tinged with avarice." He suspected (and he had good grounds for his suspicion) the Company's servants of corresponding with

a widowed daughter of Aliverdi Khan, who had adopted a probable rival to the throne; and he was greatly irritated when they gave a cordial welcome to Kissendas, the son of her Hindu lover and principal adviser, who, under pretence of a pilgrimage to the sacred shrine of Jugernath, had proceeded to Calcutta with his family and an immense amount of treasures. Kissendas took up his residence with Omichund, a banker of great wealth. Macaulay speaks of him as "the artful Bengalee," but he was a trader from the north of India who had for forty years resided in Bengal. His commerce extended to every part of the province, and he had provided most of the Company's investments. But three years before the arrival of Kissendas, Omichund was excluded from any participation in the Company's affairs, and this vexed his pride and avarice. It was stated at the time that he was an active party in bringing Kissendas to Calcutta, with the intention of ruining the English by embroiling them in a quarrel with Aliverdi or of regaining his former influence by acting as mediator.

The reception of Kissendas at Calcutta has been assigned as one of the main causes of the war, but it was due to a deeper and more remote foundation. Captain Rennie states that "the principal cause of the war was the knowledge of what has happened on the coast of Coromandel, for many Moors (and some of distinction among them) have come lately

from thence and declared that the English and French have divided the country, while their respective Nabobs are no better than shadows of what they should be." The news of the capture of the great stronghold of Gheria on the Malabar coast by Clive confirmed the impression that the Europeans intended to claim the whole as their own. Soon after the receipt of the intelligence of the taking of Gheria Aliverdi died, and Suraja Dowlah took quiet possession of the government. He at once sent a written order to the Governor of Calcutta to deliver Kissendas up, his property and his followers. The messenger, a man of considerable importance, who entered Calcutta in the disguise of a European, "was turned out of the factory and off the shore with derision and insolence."

When our Hindu agent at his Court represented the suspicions which had induced the authorities at Calcutta to treat the messenger as an impostor, Suraja Dowlah listened armed with the true impenetrability of an Oriental. He showed no emotion or displeasure,—news had reached him of a more serious and exasperating nature than an affront to his messenger. His spies at Calcutta had often informed him of the small strength of its fortifications and garrison, and before the death of Aliverdi Khan "the easy capture of it was the Publick discourse of the city and Durbar"—Suraja Dowlah was now informed that the English were busy raising

strong fortifications. The report was in a certain measure true. He had just been proclaimed when a letter from the E.I. Court reached Calcutta stating that war with France was inevitable, and "in consequence of these advices the line of guns towards the river was repaired and strengthened and some other trifling works erected, particularly a Redoubt at Perin's Garden." Suraja Dowlah at once wrote to the President "that he did not approve of our carrying on these works without his permission, and ordered Mr Drake to desist immediately, and destroy what he had already done." The French having strengthened their fort by an additional bastion, also received an order to the like effect. They discreetly replied that "they had not built New Works, and had only Repaired One of their Bastions, which had been injured by Lightning, with which answer he appeared satisfied." The English President, on the other hand, stated, "That in the late War between Our Nation and the French, they had attacked and taken the Town of Madras Contrary to the neutrality We expected would have been preserved in the Mogull's Dominions; and that there being at present great appearance of another War between the Two Crowns, We were under some apprehensions they would act in the same way in Bengal, to prevent which We were only repairing our Line of Guns to the Water-side." The indiscreet answer increased the

wrath and suspicion of Suraja Dowlah. It seemed to him an evasion of his clear demand. "Upon what pretence," he wrote, "will the French attempt to attack them on the river? which they have never done since the settlement of Europeans in the Country." If the English began the struggle he feared it would lead, as it had done in the Carnatic, to the ascendancy of the conqueror and the destruction of the power of the native princes. Suraja Dowlah felt that if he were to maintain his supremacy he must take some open and decided action. Now was the time. He had firmly established himself on the throne, and had collected a large army to chastise a rebellious cousin. On the 28th of May he sent the principal merchant of the province, who resided at Hughley, a letter stating—

"It has been my design to level the English fortifications raised within my jurisdiction on account of their great strength; as I have nothing at present to divert me from the execution of that resolution, I am determined to make use of this opportunity; for which reason I am returning from Ragahmaul, and shall use the utmost expedition on my march that I may arrive before Calcutta as soon as possible."

He added at the bottom in his own hand:—

"I swear by the Great God and the prophets that unless the English consent to fill up their ditch, raze their fortifications, and trade upon the same terms they did in the time of Nabob Jaffeer Cawn, I will not hear anything on their behalf, and will expel them totally out of my country."

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On the 9th of June Suraja Dowlah, having seized the factory at Kasimbazar, near his capital, bent his march towards Calcutta. On the 7th of June news reached Fort William that Kasimbazar had surrendered, and "that the Nabob was determined to march to Calcutta with his whole army, estimated then at 50,000 men besides a large train of artillery." The English, when they fortified their settlement, had never meant that it should be able to stand a regular siege, and had contented themselves with throwing up work sufficient to protect the inhabitants against "an irruption of the Moors" and an inroad of the Mahratta horse. Orme, in a "Narrative of the Loss of Calcutta, composed at Madras, October 1756," which has never been printed, speaks of Fort William as "a building which many an old house in the country exceeds in its defence":—

"It is situated a few paces from the river-side, on the bank of which runs a line of guns the whole length of the fort from North to South, and this the only formidable part, as it is capable of annoying ships on the river. The ends of this line are joined to the two bastions of the fort nearest the river by a garden wall and a gate in each, which would resist one shot of a six-pounder, but which would be forced by the second. Opposite to the two bastions mentioned are two others placed to the Eastward, but within thirty yards to the North and fifty yards to the South the bastions are commanded by large houses. To the Eastward inland the top of the church commands the whole of both the Northern and Eastern Ramparts."

The curtains of the fort were

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only four feet thick, and terraces, which were the roofs of the chambers, formed the top of the ramparts. Nine years before the siege a range of warehouses had been built on the inside of the southern face occupying the space between the flanks of the adjacent bastions, and consequently rendering, as Holwell states, "your two southerly bastions useless to each other, and to the whole southerly face of the fort, which could not be flanked by a single gun from either bastion." Holwell's account of the condition of the fortifications illustrates how ancient is the English prerogative never to prepare in the time of peace for the exigencies of actual war. "The ruinous state of the lines to the Westward of the fort," he writes, "had been a reproach to our settlement, and to everything bearing the name of fortification, for more than two years. The whole easterly curtain had been for many years in so ruinous a condition as not to bear a gun; one we fired from it, a three or four pounder, as I remember, which made its way through the terrace." The ammunition, like the fortifications, was impaired by neglect.

"'No cartridges,' writes Captain Grant, the adjutant-general, 'of any kind ready. The small quantity of grape in store had lyen by so long that it was destroyed by worms; no shells fitted nor Fuses prepared for small or great. The few that were thrown at the siege burst half way. There were 2 Iron Mortars, one of 13 and the other of 10 inches, sent out about 3 years ago. The 10-inch

Mortar we had just finished the bed for it, but the 13-inch one lay by useless for want of one; tho' there was upwards of 300 shells sent out for both, all that could be prepared was not above 20, and such as was thrown of them burst some after quitting the mortar, other half way. We had but a small quantity of powder, and the greatest part of that damp.'"

The regular force of the garrison amounted only to 264 men, of whom a portion were native Portuguese and Armenians. "Of these Handful of Troops in Garrison there were not five who had ever I believe seen a Muskett fired in Anger." The officers, however commanding the regular companies—Minchen, Clayton, Buchanan, Grant, and Wetherington—had all except Clayton seen service either in Europe or the Coromandel coast. Captain Minchen was the chief commander. Of him Holwell writes, and the other narratives confirm the justice of his criticism: "Touching the Military capacity of our Commandant I am a stranger. I can only say we were unhappy in his keeping it to himself if he had any, as neither I, nor, I believe, any one else was witness to any part of His Conduct that spoke or bore the appearance of his being the Commanding Military Officer in garrison."

When the news that Suraja Dowlah was advancing on them reached Calcutta, a council of war, consisting of the military captains and the engineer joined to the ordinary Council, was held. It decided that the Militia should be called out. That same evening the Governor, "by beat of drum, caused all the inhabitants of Calcutta fit

to bear arms to be assembled." The next morning, the 8th of June, two companies of Militia were enrolled, consisting of the European, Portuguese, and Armenian inhabitants, amounting to 250 men. If they had been regularly trained to arms according to the repeated orders of the Court, they might at this juncture, as Holwell states, have "been a most seasonable supply, but this essential regulation, I am sorry to say, was totally neglected, so that when We came to action there was hardly any amongst the Armenians and Portuguese inhabitants, and but few among the European Militia, who knew the Right from the Wrong end of their pieces." Holwell commanded the 1st company of the Militia and William Mackett the 2nd, "and the following gentlemen were appointed officers under them—viz., Robert Mapletoft (a clergyman Chaplain of the Presidency, Captain-Lieutenant; Richard Court, H. Wedderburn, T. Holmes, and Wm. Summer, Lieutenants; C. Douglas, T. Coates, and R. H. Baldrick, Ensigns; and William Dumbleton, Adjutant."

The council of war, instead of repairing and strengthening the fortifications of the fort, determined that "Batterys should be erected in all the roads leading to the fort at such distances as Cou'd be anywise defensible with the small number of Troops We had." The resolution was a capital error. The troops were few in number and the ground covered a considerable area. Captain Grant supplies the reason which led the Council to come to so

unwise a decision. No one thought, "even to the very last day, that the Nabob would ever venture to attack us or offer to force our lines."

Orme enables us by plan and description to ascertain exactly where the three batteries which the besieged constructed and mounted were situated. The eastern battery was erected near the present Scotch church, "opposite to the Eastern gate of the fort, at the distance of 300 yards on the principal avenue, which continued in a straight line to the rearward as far as the Merattoo ditch." This battery adjoined to the left the gateway of an enclosure, in which, at the distance of a few feet, stood a very spacious house of one floor in which the mayor's court and assizes used to be held. The north battery must have been situated at the foot of Clive Ghat Street; the third battery, at the corner where Hastings Street, Council House Street, and Government Place meet. The fort occupied a site now comprised between Coilah Ghat Street and Fairlie Place. The chief gateway looked out upon an avenue, which was skirted on the north side by a large enclosure called "the Park," and Orme's plan gives under the enclosure the tank, which forms a prominent feature in Dalhousie Square. To the south of the Park was the Rope Walk, at whose eastern extremity was the east battery. Beyond the Rope Walk there were three large English houses, and a short distance from them, on the edge of the avenue, was the gaol.

On the 13th of June a letter was intercepted from the chief of the Nabob's spies to Omichund. The banker was arrested and imprisoned in the fort. And Omichund, who was "implacable in his resentments," never forgave the insult and injury. His endeavours to mitigate things, when he really found they were coming to extremities, Holwell states, were sincere enough, "until his imprisonment by the President, an Act of his power and sole authority, for which the pretence made use of was in my judgment by no means sufficient: the correspondence detected between him and Rajoram Harkarah (the Suba's Head Spy), which was read in the presence of many of us, contained in our opinions nothing to vindicate it, nor had your President even the consent or approbation of his Council for this step, or that I ever remember acquired it." When Omichund was arrested his brother-in-law concealed himself in the women's apartments. The next day a body of peons were sent to arrest him and Kissendas. The latter, who had gathered around him a large number of armed retainers, vigorously defended his house, drove the peons away, "and took some of them prisoners, whom he treated very barbarously." Lieutenant Blagg was now sent with thirty Europeans, who stormed the house and "took him with all his arms, which was a very large quantity." At Omichund's house the resistance was equally desperate. When further defence was hopeless the head

of his followers, "who was an Indian of a high caste, set fire to the house, and in order to save the women of the family from the dishonour of being exposed to strangers, entered their apartments, and killed, it is said, thirteen of them with his own hand, after which he stabbed himself, but, contrary to his intentions, not mortally." Kissendas was taken a prisoner into the fort: "Juggernaut Sing, the Jemmutdar or Head Peon, was conveyed away by his followers."

Meanwhile Suraja Dowlah was marching in hot haste towards Calcutta. Many of his troops died of fatigue, many more were struck down by the sun, but he pushed on. On the 15th of June he reached Hughley, and his army crossed the river in a vast fleet of boats, which had accompanied him on his march. Early in the morning of the 16th of June the inhabitants of Calcutta were alarmed by the tidings that he was close at hand. The English women left their houses and retired to the fort; the Portuguese or black Christians—men, women, and children—about 2000 in number, also sought shelter within its walls. The natives fled from the town. About noon the booming of guns confirmed the news. The advanced-guard of the royal army had reached Chitpur, the northern suburb, and had opened a brisk cannonade on the "Fortune" ketch and "Chance" sloop, that had been sent up the river to assist the garrison of the redoubt at Perrin's. It consisted of only twenty Europeans, commanded by Edward

Piccard,¹ ensign. The ships, by keeping a quick fire, maintained their station, "upon which the enemy turned their whole force upon the redoubt, and accordingly brought up their cannon on elephants to the edge of a small wood, to the northward of the fosse," over which there was a drawbridge. Six guns were playing on the redoubt and the sloop when Lieutenant Blagg with forty Europeans, an 18-pounder, and two brass field-pieces arrived. Under the fire of their cannon and small-arms the enemy, 4000 strong, made several attempts to force a passage across the bridge, but "our little troop" checked them by a constant platoon fire, "as likewise by playing smartly the two three-pounders." For hours the unequal contest raged. It was half-past six when the enemy, seeing the picquet advancing, retired into the grove. "At midnight nothing was moving in the thickets; for every man, after eating his meal, had as usual betook himself to sleep; which Ensign Piccard, who had served on the coast of Coromandel, suspected from their silence, and crossing the rivulet at midnight with his party, seized and spiked the four pieces of cannon, beat up and drove all the troops out of the thicket, and returned without the loss of a man." The enemy must have sustained a considerable loss in their attack, "for seventy-nine of their dead were found the next morning, most of them killed with cannon-shot at the corner of the wood where they had brought up their artillery."

The main body of the enemy, on desisting from their attack, "directly drew off their artillery and filed off in very large columns towards Dum Dum plains." This movement was due to the advice of Omichund's head peon, who, in spite of his wounds, was put upon his horse and led to Suraja Dowlah, "whom he informed of the transactions relating to his master's imprisonment; and when the enemy was repulsed at Baagbazar he led the van of the army to the eastward, and directed them the avenues by which they could enter our bounds." During the night the enemy reached Cow Cross Bridge, where they encamped "behind the brick-kilns, and stretched from the bungalows as far as Govinderam's Metre's Garden on the Dum Dum road." At Cow Cross Bridge were posted 1000 peons and *buxerries* (hired matchlock men), who deserted to the enemy. Next morning (17th June) Monsieur Le Beaume, "who was a French officer, and left Chandnagar on a point of honour, requested permission to take possession of the gaol, about 200 yards advanced before the Battery A (eastern battery), and where three roads terminated into the place." He was sent with 12 military and militia, 40 *buxerries*, and 2 cannon, to take possession of it. "He broke embrasures through the gaol-house for the cannon, and made loopholes all round for the musquetry." The enemy, however, did not appear in sight of the batteries

¹ Also spelt Picard, Paccard, and Fischard.

that day, "but they entered the skirts of the town, plundering and burning all they met on their way, especially the Black merchants' houses." Many of them were taken prisoners. Their accounts of the Nabob's situation and strength varied so much that little dependence could be placed on them.

"Our own Intelligence all along from our spies was equally so. These Prisoners in general told us that he had all the Cossinbuzar's cannon, and 10 or 15 pieces, which he brought from Muscadabad of a larger size, besides numbers of swivels and wall pieces mounted on camels and elephants. That his troops consisted of 20,000 to 30,000 Horse and Foot."

The garrison was also advised by their spies and prisoners that the Nabob's artillery "was commanded by a French Renegade who had been an officer at Pondicherry, and gave himself the Title of *Marquis de St Jaque*,¹ and had under his command 25 Europeans and 80 Chittygam Fringeas." By evening the enemy had set fire to the great bazaar and many parts of the Black Town and the English, all the Bazaar, and Native huts to the eastward and southward, "which burnt till morning, and being so very extensive and near, formed a scene too horrible for language." That night the peons and matchlock-men, to the number of 500, deserted to the enemy, as the lascars and coolies had done some days before. "That we had not a Black Fellow to draw or work a gun, not even to carry a cotton bale or sandbag on ye

Ramperts; and what work of that kind had been done was by the Military and Militia. This want of workmen at last and Scarcity at ye beginning harras'd us Prodigiously, and prevented our doing several works that would have been necessary."

Early on the morning of the 18th the enemy appeared in all quarters of the town, and the tactics they intended to pursue soon became apparent. They meant to force their way into the lines, not by attacking the batteries, but by creeping into the different houses. The garrison "accordingly fortified some of the houses which they thought commanded the batteries with as many as could possibly be spared." But they had very few to spare. The fighting men of the garrison were so small a number that they found it difficult to perform their ordinary duties and also guard the crowd of prisoners. "The same morning," writes William Tooke, "orders were issued out that no quarter was to be given to the enemy, the prison being but a very small place, was full, and among other prisoners was Omichund." About eight o'clock a large body of the enemy took possession of the houses adjoining the southern battery, from whence they opened a destructive fire of musketry and wall-pieces. The guns of the battery were turned against these houses, but they had little effect on the hard Indian mortar. However, Buchanan, who was in command, and his gallant men

¹ Marquis de St Jacques.

fought on strongly and sent small bodies of men to hold the houses to the left of the battery, so that their flank might not be turned through any of the avenues in that direction.

An hour later a column of the enemy rushed up the narrow street leading to the northern battery, commanded by Lieutenant-Captain Small. The guns opened fire with grape, and smote them with such effect that they went to confusion. Many took shelter in the adjoining streets, "from whence they came out in small parties and continued a desultory fire." A platoon with a field-piece was detached to drive them out of the cross-streets, which they easily effected. They then proceeded along the southern street, until they lost sight of the battery. The enemy, seeing their error, returned through the cross-streets to cut off their retreat, "but yielded again to the field-pieces and the fire of the platoon." Soon after the whole body went away and joined those who were employed against the eastern battery.

About eleven o'clock the enemy brought two cannon to bear on the gaol, "one of them an 18 lb. by the size of the balls." Ensign Carstairs with twenty men and two field-pieces was sent to reinforce Le Beaume. "But the walls of the gaol-house were so weak that they were hardly any defence against their cannon." However, the gallant garrison held it till about two, "when Le Beaume and Ensign Carstairs, being both wounded, and numbers of their men killed, had liberty to

retire within Captain Clayton's Battery." The enemy instantly took possession of the gaol and all the adjacent houses.

"Tho' our men from the tops and windows of the houses kept a constant fire on them as they advanced, and our cannon from the Fort and our Batterys played on every house they cou'd see them in possession of, and endeavour'd, tho' with little success, to fling shell amongst them (which had they been properly fitted for service would have been of more use than our cannon), yet the superiority of their numbers under cover of the Houses at all quarters made it impossible for our people to withstand such showers of small shott as they fired into the houses we had possession of."

At one o'clock Captain Clayton recalled all his out-parties. He had been reinforced with an 18-pounder "to endeavour to demolish the houses round about," but all their endeavours proved ineffectual. From the three houses on the right and two on the left the enemy poured a murderous fire into the east battery. Only those who were working the guns remained; the rest took shelter in the mayor's court, from whence a soldier came forth to face the storm of cannonade and musketry when a comrade fell at the guns. At four o'clock a large body of the enemy forced the palisade at the farther or western end of the Rope Walk, and made a rush down the lane to take the battery. The gunners got one of the 18-pounders to bear on them, and "stopped their career with much slaughter, the Fort at the same time keeping a warm fire upon them from the Bastions." For an hour the hurricane raged. The enemy "had now possessed the

Houses in all quarters of the town in Multitudes, and by their superiority obliged most of the men to quit the Houses they occupied." They threatened to attack the battery in flank, and cut off their retreat. About five o'clock Captain Clayton ordered Mr Holwell, who, "as Captain of the first company of militia, was stationed under him at this Battery with a detachment of militia, to go down to the Fort and represent the state of the Battery, and receive orders whether it should be withdrawn or maintained." He hastened to the Fort, and

"the orders were to withdraw it immediately and spike up the cannon we could not bring off. I returned with these orders, and to my astonishment found the two 18-Pounders and one of the 6-Pounders on the Battery spiked up, and the Post in such confusion as bars all description. There was nothing could have prevented their bringing off the cannon and making the most regular and soldier-like retreat, had we been commanded by an officer of Resolution and Judgment, but as it was, our Retreat had more the appearance of a confused Rout, bringing off only one Field-Piece, and the cannon spiked with so little art that they were easily drilled and turned against us."

At the southern battery Captain Buchanan, finding himself pressed in front and his communication with the fort threatened, fell back upon an inner battery close to the Park gate, leaving one of his field-pieces at the corner of the Park wall to cover his retirement. To the east of the southern battery was a palisade which was overlooked by two large houses, one on each hand. A sergeant and sixteen

soldiers were posted on one of them. Lieutenant Blagg "and ten of our volunteers (8 of them your covenanted servants)" were despatched from Captain Buchanan's post to sustain them, "and they threw themselves into the other house (Captain Minchin's), from the top of which they made a great slaughter of the enemy." About three o'clock Captain Clayton withdrew the garrison from the neighbouring house. Soon after the sergeant and sixteen men who defended the palisade deserted. The enemy broke it down, and rushing in, took possession of all the houses around—"nay, even of that house itself, and barricaded the doors up to the very top of the house, which passage to the top being very narrow, they did not dare to attempt." Deserted and begirt by enemies, Blagg and his ten volunteers held the house resolutely. A destructive fire was poured on them from the neighbouring houses, and "they were in no small danger from our own guns at the factory, who were at that time playing very smartly on the enemy." At seven o'clock their ammunition was exhausted. An attempt had been made to relieve them, and had failed. Nothing was left but to sally forth. The door was burst open, and they made for a lane at the back of the house, "in the hope of getting under shelter of our guns." They found the avenue crowded with the enemy. "Messrs Smith and Wilkinson, two of the party, having imprudently advanced

a little too far, were cut to pieces, though the first killed 4 or 5 of the enemy before he fell; the remainder, by making good use of their bayonets (not having a single charge left), gained the front gate of the house." By this time the enemy had taken possession of the whole square. Blagg and his eight comrades, fighting gallantly, ran the gantlet of their fire till they reached the field-piece at the corner of the Park wall, "which, playing upon the enemy, drove them to a greater distance."

Captain Buchanan was ordered to post a lieutenant and thirty men at the Company's House, and to march the rest into the factory, "which he did, having made a very fine retreat by securing all his ammunition, and without the loss of a gun except an 18-pounder which was sent to the inner battery, and upon his being ordered away so abruptly he left it spiked up." As the inner battery was within pistol-shot of the walls, and commanded two out of the three roads of the place, its abandonment was a grave error. Orders were now sent to Lieutenant-Captain Smith to withdraw from the northern battery, and boats were despatched which brought away Piccard and his twenty men from Perrin's redoubt. When darkness fell all three batteries had been abandoned, "and most people said that the fall of them would be attended with fatal consequences."

That night was one of great tumult and confusion in the fort. The native Portuguese

women filled the passages with loud clamour, and crowded the back gate in order to force their way on board the ships. At nine o'clock a council of war was held, and "the European women were ordered on board the ships, and Colonel Manningsham and Lieutenant-Colonel Frankland permitted to see them safe there." The detachment in the Company's House having been much galled by the enemy's fire from the next house to the south, "thought their situation too dangerous to be maintained on ye approach of Day," and were withdrawn. At midnight the enemy were heard approaching to escalate the terraces of the warehouses. Every man of the garrison was so harassed and fatigued for want of rest by constant duty for two days, "that it was impossible to rouse them even if ye enemy had been scaling ye walls. Three different times did ye Drums beat to arms, but in vain, not a man could be got to stand to their arms, tho' we had frequent Alarms of ye enemy's preparing ladders under our walls to scale them." The enemy, however, hearing the drums beat, thought the garrison prepared, and retreated.

About one o'clock in the morning a second council of war was held.

"The majority of the military officers gave it as their opinion, that it was impracticable to defend the fort with so small a garrison and so unprovided with stores for a siege, against the numerous army of the enemy; the artillery officers reported we had not enough powder and shot for three days; our bombs and grenades were of no use, the fuses being spoiled by the dampness of the

climate owing to their being filled some years, and never looked into afterwards."

It was therefore unanimously agreed that a retreat to the ships was the best step to be taken. A dispute arose "whether that retreat ought to be made immediately, under favour of the night, or deferred till the next day, and in what manner to conduct a general retreat without confusion or tumult." Mr Cooke adds: "It was at least resolved to defer the retreat till the next night, and that all the next day should be employed in embarking the Portuguese women and our most valuable effects, by which means we should avoid the disorder we dreaded."

At break of day the enemy renewed their attack and cannonaded the fort very briskly from two or three different batteries, besides keeping up a hot fire from the houses they had occupied. They had, however, neglected to take possession of the Company's House, "and Ensign Piccard having offered to maintain it with twenty military, his proposal was readily agreed to." But to hold it was an impossible task. From the house-tops, ensconced behind the walls of the enclosure, the enemy sent their bullets fast. Every loophole was a target for them, but the fire was returned with steadiness and not without effect. But though many of them fell, "their loss in so great a multitude was scarcely felt and immediately supplied." At nine o'clock Ensign Piccard was

brought in wounded from the Company's House, and by noon the garrisons had been withdrawn from all the houses inside the walls. The courage of the enemy increased with their success, whilst confusion and terror prevailed more and more in the garrison. Then from the ramparts they saw a sight which filled them with despair. The ships were floating down the river.

Early in the morning the embarkation of the women had begun. But as no orders for the general retreat had been issued, "many of the inhabitants imagined everybody was to shift for himself," and "every one endeavoured to get on board such vessel as he could, and to be the first to be embarked." The boats were filled with more than they could carry, and several were upset. "Most of those who had crowded into them were drowned, and such as floated with the tide to the shore were either made prisoners or massacred; for the enemy had taken possession of all the houses and inclosures along the bank of the river, from which stations they shot fire-arrows into the ships and vessels, in hope of burning them." The Captain of the *Doddalay*,¹ fearing that she would be burnt, hoisted anchor, and between nine and ten o'clock dropped down to Surman Garden. Then every ship and sloop followed the example, and weighing anchor floated down the stream. The spectacle of the ships creeping

¹ Also spelt *Doddaly*, *Dodalay*, and *Dodley*.

away increased the confusion and uproar on the bank. One who was present writes:—

“The moment it was observed many of the gentlemen on shore (who perhaps never dreamt of leaving the factory till everybody did) immediately jumped into such boats as were at the factory stairs and rowed to the ships. Among those who left the Factory in this unaccountable manner were the Governor, Mr Drake, Mr Mackett, Captain-Commandant Minchen, and Captain Grave.”

Drake attributes his desertion to a momentary act of panic. It is admitted that he had freely exposed himself to danger when visiting the fortifications. But when the supreme test came, an evil conscience and love of life prevailed. For Mackett there is some excuse. He had the previous night left his wife on board the *Doddalay*, “dangerously ill as she was, and returned to the Fort, though the strongest persuasions, I am well informed,” says Holwell, “were used to detain him on Board.”

The spirit of the soldiers swelled up high and fierce against the dastards who had deserted them. Nothing was heard for some time but execrations against the fugitives. No sooner, however, had the first burst of rage at their cowardice spent itself than the garrison, “one and all,” called upon Mr Holwell to assume the command. A Council was hastily summoned, and the senior member of Council on shore was told that the garrison had elected Mr Holwell their governor. On assuming the chief civil and military

command Holwell exercised his authority with resolution. He locked the western gate in order to prevent further desertion. The whole force which he could muster in defence of the fort, including the militia, amounted only to 190 men, but he might be able to hold it until the ships could be made use of. They lay a mile distant. “Signals were thrown out from every part of the fort for the ships to come up again to their stations. But there never was a single effort made to send a boat or vessel to bring off any part of the garrison.”

Meanwhile the enemy pressed on their attack with great vigour. From the church they galled the garrison in a terrible manner, and killed and wounded a prodigious number. “In order to prevent this havoc as much as possible, we got up a quantity of broadcloth in bales, with which we made traverses along the curtains and bastions; we fixed up likewise some bales of cotton against the parapets (which were very thin, and of brick-work only) to resist the cannonballs, and did everything in our power to baffle their attempts.” But by no expedient could they hold out much longer. In the heat of the fight a gleam of hope appeared. The *Prince George* (a Company’s ship employed in the country) had been ordered up to Perrin’s to assist that redoubt, and when the garrison had been withdrawn from it the *Prince George* was directed to fall down to her station opposite the south-east bastion of the fort. About

noon her sails were seen. Two of the garrison were immediately sent on board with positive instructions to the commander to bring his ship as near the fort as he could. As she bore down with the sails set all were filled with the expectation of a safe retreat that night. "But it was otherwise determined by Providence; for by some strange fatality the Prince George run aground a little above the factory (owing to the Pilot's misconduct, who lost his presence of mind) and was never after got off." Death now stared them in the face.

The enemy suspended their attack as usual when it grew dark, says Cooke, "but the night was not less dreadful on that account; the Company's House, Mr Cruttenden's, Mr Nixon's, Doctor Knox's, and the marine yards were now in flames, and exhibited a spectacle of unspeakable horror. We were surrounded on all sides by the Nabob's forces, which made a retreat by land impracticable; and we had not even the shadow of a prospect to effect a retreat by water, after the Prince George run aground."

On the Sunday morning, June 25, the besiegers renewed their cannonade, and pushed the siege with much more warmth and vigour than ever they had done. About eight o'clock they attempted to break into the fort by means of some windows in the eastern curtain which the besieged had neglected to brick up. Every man rushed to the spot, and there

was stiff fighting to keep them out. At this moment an alarm was spread that the enemy were scaling the north-west bastion, and to defend it a stubborn conflict ensued. For above an hour the hottest fire "that we had yet seen" continued on both sides. "The besiegers at length gave over their efforts, and retired with great loss; but they continued to cannonade very briskly from the batteries, and with their wall-pieces and musquetry did us infinite mischief." About fifty Europeans perished on the bastion.

Early in the morning Holwell, "to quiet the minds of everybody as much as lies in my power," had a letter written by Omichund to Monickchund, the Governor of Hughley, who commanded a considerable body of the enemy's troops, requesting him "to use his influence with the Suba to order His Troop to cease Hostilities; that We were ready to obey His commands, and persisted only in defending the Fort in preservation of our Lives and Honours." An Armenian undertook to carry the letter to Monickchund, and was suffered to pass. About noon the enemy, after their mortifying repulse, ceased to fire. For two hours not one of them was to be seen. Men began to hope that Omichund's letter had reached Suraja Dowlah, and had produced the desired effect. But no answer ever came. At two o'clock the enemy appeared again, but they did not resume their attack with any vigour. "About four afternoon word was brought me," says Holwell, "that some of the enemy

was advancing with a Flag in his Hand, and called us to cease firing, and that We should have quarter if We surrendered: this was judged a favourable juncture to answer it with a Flag of Truce." Accordingly Holwell repaired with the flag to the original south-eastern bastion, where Captain Buchanan was posted, and ordered firing to cease.

"I had a letter prepared with me addressed to Roy Doolub, the General of the Forces, importing an overture to cease hostilities until the Suba could be wrote to and His pleasure known. This Letter I threw over the Ramparts and Hoisted the Flag of Truce on the Bastion. The Letter was taken up by the Person who advanced with the Flag, who retired with it. Soon after multitudes of the Enemy came out of their hiding-Places round us and Flocked under the Walls; a short Parley ensued. I demanded a Truce to Hostilities until the Suba's pleasure could be known. To which I was answered by one of His officers from below that the Suba was there, and His pleasure was that we should have quarter. I was going to reply when at that Instant Mr William Baillie, standing near me, was slightly wounded by a Musket-ball from the enemy on the side of the Head, and Word was brought to me that they were attempting to force the South-West Barrier and were cutting at the Eastern Gate."

The enemy had treacherously made use of the truce not only to crowd in multitudes under the walls, but with ladders and bamboos they scaled the north-west bastion and the wall to the southward, which was low. The gallant Blagg defended the bastion till he and his men were cut to pieces. "Many were slain on the walls: all who wore red coats without

mercy." As soon as it was known that the enemy had driven the besieged from the walls, "a Dutchman of the Artillery Company," says Cooke, "broke open the back-door of the factory, and with many others attempted to escape." Holwell, on hearing that the western gate was forced by our own people, and betrayed, instantly sent Ensign Walcott with orders to see if there was no possibility of securing it again. "He returned and told me it was impossible, for the Locks and Bolts were forced off." Holwell now saw that the courtyard below was thronged with the enemy, who had entered by the open gate. Thinking "that further opposition would not only be fruitless, but might be attended with bad consequences to the garrison," he and Captain Buchanan "delivered up their swords to a Jemmantdar (native officer) that had scaled the walls and seemed to act with some authority among the Moors." The few troops who had survived surrendered prisoners of war.

So ended the siege of Calcutta. For three days a few soldiers and a motley gathering of civilians held a range of fragile buildings, encircled by a mouldering wall, against an army furnished with guns and Europeans trained to use them, and a vast host of armed men inspired by hatred and fanaticism. It ended in disaster, but the men who did the fighting showed at the siege of Calcutta English courage at its very best.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

MR KRUGER'S 'MEMOIRS'—WHO "TOLD" THEM?—THE BOERS' BITTER ANIMOSITY AGAINST ENGLAND—MR KRUGER'S CHARACTER AND CAREER—WHAT IS SUCCESS?—THE VIEW OF MR CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM—TROJANS AND GREEKS AT OXFORD—THE TRIUMPH OF HUMANE LETTERS.

MR PAUL KRUGER presents the unedifying spectacle of an old gentleman in a very bad temper. If we may believe the several partisans who appear to have had a hand in the compilation of his so-called 'Memoirs,'¹ the former President of the Transvaal has not permitted exile to calm his resentment nor to impair his cunning. His book from beginning to end is a bitter attack upon English rule in South Africa. Its interest is momentary and impersonal. After the first chapter, which sets forth the prowess of Mr Kruger in the hunting of big game, we find no page which might not have been written without the intervention of the hero himself. The book, in fact, is a controversial pamphlet, in which no attempt is made to arrive at the truth; and few of the events which it roughly summarises are regarded from the point of view of Mr Kruger. This discrepancy between the title-page and the book is frankly acknowledged in the preface. The legend—'Memoirs of Paul Kruger, told by Himself'—is definite enough, but, says the publisher, "the English edition is translated from Dr Schowalter's German text, collated line for line with

Mr Kruger's original Dutch, with this difference that, in the English edition, Mr Kruger speaks in the first person throughout, whereas, in the Continental editions, the narrative is allowed to change into the third person from the point at which Mr Kruger begins to attain a prominent position in the affairs of his country." This note says too much or too little. If Mr Kruger dictated his 'Memoirs,' how is it that the narrative was "allowed to change into the third person"? No man telling the story of his own life makes this transition merely because he attains a prominent position, and if the book were composed in the first person, as the note implies, why were the editors induced to "change" the narrative? Again, supposing the story to have been "told" by Paul Kruger, we see no necessity for the two hundred and fifty questions which the preface boasts were drawn up by Dr Schowalter. These doubts must remain unresolved until we know more of "Mr Kruger's original Dutch," but we are bound to confess that internal evidence intensifies the uncertainty, and we cannot accept the book as anything better

¹ The Memoirs of Paul Kruger, told by Himself. London: Fisher Unwin.

than another statement, in the old familiar terms, of the pro-Boer case.

Now, it is the distinguishing mark of an autobiography that it presents the experience of one single man. It records events always in relation to the author, who helped to shape the history chronicled by himself. To cite two familiar examples, no other hand save Samuel's own could have written Pepys' Diary; no other brain save the brain of Thomas Elwood could have devised the famous exposition of Quakerism. But Mr Kruger's 'Memoirs' might easily have been written either by Mr Bredell or by Mr Piet Grobler, to whom (we are told) they were dictated. The mystery is unfortunate, since it deprives the work of the small value which it might have possessed. Nothing could have interested us more profoundly than Mr Kruger's impressions, true or false, of African policy and African warfare. We cannot but be bored by a repetition (*crambe repetita*!) of stale slanders and ancient arguments.

However, it is plain that Mr Kruger hates all that is English—both men and things. He hates Sir Bartle Frere and Lord Roberts, Lord Loch and Mr Chamberlain, Rhodes and Lord Milner. He covers them all with a vituperation which is not too carefully selected, and which is too general to be dangerous or expressive. For the blunders and falsehoods with which the book abounds there is no excuse. These 'Memoirs,' as we have said, are less a personal impres-

sion than a compilation, and, had Mr Kruger desired the plain truth, there are many sources from which he might have drawn it. But he seldom deigns to justify his statements, or to enforce his arguments by facts. In small things as in great he is grossly contemptuous of accuracy. His account of Shepstone's annexation of the Transvaal is ludicrously inexact. He passes with a light hand over the weakness and necessities of the Republic; he forgets the empty treasury, and the Kaffirs who threatened the borders of the state; he forgets that the majority of the Burghers were content to live under British rule until they were disturbed by agitation. He suppresses the interesting fact that not only did he accept from the British Government an income of £200 a-year, withdrawn from him on account of his disloyalty, but that he begged of his "oppressors" a comfortable increase. In brief, not one ray of light does he throw upon a difficult chapter of history, in which he played a tortuous part. He is satisfied with abuse, which, unjustified by fact, has all the appearance of insincerity.

Nor is he more scrupulous in tone when he considers the achievements of Sir Bartle Frere. His account of Frere's visit to the Boer camp is the superfluous revival of a slander disproved upon the spot. "Meantime, Sir Bartle Frere"—these are the words of Mr Kruger's 'Memoirs'—"who had promised to attend this meeting,

had not arrived. He had left Natal for Kleinfontein, but was travelling very slowly. Possibly he hoped that the delay would discourage the Boers, or that we would return to our homes without its being necessary for him to appear. From Heidelberg he sent word that he would have no time to stop at the camp, as he had to go to Pretoria. He received an answer, however, to say that we had long been waiting for him, and relied upon seeing him. He then determined to come." It is needless to say that there is not one word of truth in this charge of cowardly evasion. The falsehood was first told in a letter addressed to Frere, while he was on his way to the camp. There was no time to send an answer, but Frere's first action, when he arrived at the camp, was to demand an explanation. "On nearing Ferguson's hotel," says Frere's biographer, "Pretorius, Chairman of the Committee, Viljoen, Bok, and others, came up. On Pretorius being introduced, Frere, refusing his proffered hand, at once took him severely to task for the letter, demanding how he dared to suggest that the promise, which he, not only as a gentleman, but in the name of the Queen, whose representative he was, had made, could be broken. Pretorius, astonished and abashed, admitted his fault and apologised, and Frere then shook hands." Pretorius had the grace to apologise on the spot. Mr Kruger prefers to repeat the slander without a word of explanation. Yet this deceit is

not the worst. He proceeds to assert that after the meeting "Sir Bartle Frere wrote to the British Government that he regretted he did not have enough guns to disperse the rebels." This, he says, is "typically English." May we not say that the malice which prompted the falsehood is "typically Boer"?

These examples are characteristic of Mr Kruger's method, and after noting them we are not surprised to hear that Piet Grobler was murdered at the instigation of Mr Rhodes, that we called out the Kaffirs before Majuba, and that Mr Chamberlain was directly responsible for the Raid. The disingenuousness of this last charge is emphasised by the fact that after the Raid Mr Kruger thanked Mr Chamberlain for his co-operation. "I am directed by the Executive Council," he wrote, "to thank you for the offer you have made to co-operate with me under the present circumstances." But his account of the Raid is so plain a distortion of facts that we may easily neglect it, and his treatment of the Outlanders' grievances can be taken no more seriously. Equally futile is the plea that Mr Kruger was a sturdy farmer strenuously opposing the inrush of gold-miners. For his Government publicly invited the Outlanders to work the mines by which the Boers were content to profit, and Mr Esselin's letter to the Secretary of the Lisbon Berlyn Co. is a flat contradiction to the pretended policy of exclusion. "The

Government desire to see the mineral resources of the Transvaal developed to their fullest extent," said he, "and will give every assistance incumbent on them to that end." After pronouncements such as this, it is idle to deplore a pastoral community interrupted at its peaceful toil.

Indeed, if Mr Kruger is in any sense responsible for these 'Memoirs,' he adds as little to our respect for him as to our knowledge of African history. He is presented as vain, petulant, and narrow-minded. He has no more respect for the truth than for his honourable opponents. The small sect to which he belongs is in his opinion the only righteous sect in the world. His statesmanship is a mixture of cunning and intrigue, and for all his parade of the simple virtues, he has a constant eye to the main chance. Had his 'Memoirs' been sincere, they would have told us how this plain Dopper amassed a comfortable, even a princely, fortune; but they are not sincere, and they reveal little that was not already obvious, including Mr Kruger's contempt for facts. But he has a text ready for any emergency—a text which he thinks will solve every difficulty, and justify every perversion. With the true accent of hypocrisy, he declares that "we Boers must behave as Christians to the end, however uncivilised the way in which the English treat us may be." His vanity is even stronger than his piety, and the noisy reception which the French gave him at Marseilles, not to

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flatter his greatness, but merely *pour embêter les Anglais*, seems to have touched his rugged heart. What, then, is the secret of his success? He sometimes outwitted the English merely because changing Governments have made a continuous policy impossible. His triumph, indeed, was due not to his ability but to our own divided counsels, now happily uniform and united. His ascendancy over his own people is not astonishing. He is an illiterate, crude peasant, who once ruled peasants, some of them also crude and illiterate; but at the same time he is endowed with a temperament which enabled him to impose upon men far more intelligent than himself. To read the last debates in the Volksraad is to realise that Joubert and Lukas Meyer were the President's superiors in every respect. Yet they succumbed to his domination, and fought for ideals which they held to be false with the loyal courage and resolution which all the world applauds. But if for a moment we regard the book seriously, we may find in its pages the most eloquent argument in favour of the war. It is impossible that Africa should have been for ever governed by statesmen who mistook malice and chicanery for high policy. So long as Krugerism was ascendant war was inevitable, and, as has been proved half-a-dozen times, compromise an increasing danger. And now the conclusion of Mr Kruger's career is marked by this pitiful exhibition of petulant vanity,

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which can have no worse effect than to encourage Anglo-phobes of all nationalities, and which affords a striking contrast to the recent pronouncements of General Botha. Which the Boers will believe we know not; but clearly mutual trust will never be easy, so long as one leader waves a sword, while another shows a furtive olive-branch. And we shall be wise to examine the soft words of Generals Botha and De Wet with suspicious care until these two have publicly repudiated the evil sentiments of Messrs Kruger and Reitz.

Yet Mr Kruger's career has not been unsuccessful. In 1877 he was compared by a partisan paper to Joan of Arc, "a simple Boer girl who came from behind the sheep," and he was advised, as soon as he had done his work in exterminating the Kaffirs, to retire to make way for "a good President." Yet for many years he ruled his country, and he has now withdrawn to the comfort of a villa by the Mediterranean, and to the enjoyment of a considerable fortune. Not even if we judge a career by its conclusion can we pronounce this one a failure, unless we accept the gospel of Mr Cunninghame Graham, expounded in his book 'Success' (London: Duckworth). Now, Mr Cunninghame Graham is of opinion that success "touches nothing that it does not vulgarise"; and if by success he means mere material prosperity, no doubt he is right. There is nothing more vulgar than the man who pursues

wealth for its own sake, who piles up gold that his pile may be bigger than his neighbour's. Nor for sheer vulgarity can you easily match the writer who loves his royalties better than his art, or the actor who deems the profitable parade of personal vanity of more account than the interpretation of the drama. As with individuals so with countries. The decaying glory of Spain, its obstinate ideals, its perfect pride in its own superiority, is a thousand times more attractive than the neatly swept prosperity of Birmingham, or the hustling triumph of New York. If life were a play, then failure would be far more attractive than success to those who sit in the stalls. But what of the actors? Perhaps they don't count; but if they are permitted the thoughts of men, they would bitterly dread the risk of failure. No doubt they set out upon a false track, no doubt they attempt to reach a goal which is not worth reaching. Yet false and worthless as are their ambitions, they are the only ambitions they understand, and to their limited vision failure would be pitiable. We, who know better, know that the failure, if they fail, is righteously deserved, and that its picturesqueness, seldom absent from failure, gives the victims an interest which otherwise they would miss. Nevertheless, we think that Mr Cunninghame Graham has confused the issue. It is, after all, a matter of aim. He who cherishes the hope of a reasonable success is not

vulgar because he makes his hope a reality. A poet does not fail because he starves in a garret; he fails if he writes bad poetry. Some years ago there died a distinguished poet, ill-tended in a hospital. Rich in fame, he was poor in all else. Though he had not wherewithal to live in ease, his name was known from end to end of the civilised world. And not long before his death, a worthy lady who had known him in other days, and whose ideals of success were not his, came upon his name in a newspaper. Assured, good soul, that advertisement meant prosperity, she wrote in a letter this immortal phrase: "I am so glad to hear you have got on so nicely." Had she seen him, poor and ill-kempt, she would have shuddered at his state; and yet, without knowing it, she had told the truth. For the poet "had got on nicely." Poverty was no check upon his triumph. He had set out not to make money, but to sing songs, and no accident of fate could involve him in failure. Would Mr Cunninghame Graham have liked him better had his poems been as empty of music as his pockets were of money? We think not; indeed we are confident that the success which he deprecates is vulgar because it is achieved by vulgar means, and for a vulgar purpose. And if it be otherwise, what shall we say of Mr Cunninghame Graham himself? For he, too, has found success, though he sought it not. His little book strikes a note distinguished and apart.

Nearer to poetry than to prose, it combines a daintiness of touch with an irony of thought. Now realistic, now imaginative, it sings the praise of decadent (not failing) civilisations; it is brilliant with the bright and fair colours of the South. One fault alone mars it—an inapposite sentimentality, which persuades its author to forget the artist in the moralist. But it is not a failure, and itself provides an argument against its author's theory of success.

It is no doubt the worship of this hard visible success which dictates the periodic attacks which are made upon the study of Greek in our universities. Oxford has been the scene of the latest onslaught, and though the onslaught is for the moment repulsed, nothing is more certain than that it will be renewed. In truth, the study of Greek presents many vulnerable points to the enemy. It has been established in our universities for some centuries; it has no immediate or marketable value; worst of all, it encourages a taste for poetry and the graces. It is, therefore, distasteful to all reformers, to all those strenuous persons who wish to "get into line," if we may use their own inelegant phrase, and who believe that material progress is the sole end of man. But this band of vague reformers, who ever find salvation in that which is not, has been marvelously enforced of late by professors of science on the one hand, and on the other by the intellectual quacks who pre-

scribe Ollendorf as a panacea. Nor have the students of science behaved with the moderation which success enjoins. Their procedure has been that of all reformers. They made their earliest demands in all humility of spirit. They asked no more than the admission of their favourite studies into the universities. But no sooner was the concession made than they revealed their true arrogance, and exacted the suppression of whatever they disapproved. In other words, they desire to expel from their own house those whom a while ago they sued with cap in hand. They are the cuckoos of learning, who "build not for themselves." Yet they cannot complain of discouragement: their subjects are more generously endowed than any others; if ever a new building be seen in Oxford or Cambridge, it is assuredly a museum or a lecture-hall devoted to geology or biology or another branch of science. Now, this result has been achieved by the exaggerated rhetoric of those who believed that natural science would reveal all the secrets of life and death. The superiority was not compassed by fair means. The men of science preached a crusade when they should have done no more than demonstrate a method, and the foolish ones of the earth were deceived to the belief that chemistry is of greater truth and import than literature and theology taken together. To-day, let us hope, the reaction has begun, and maybe it is in fear of this reaction that the professors of science are carrying the war

into the enemy's camp. To these champions of exact knowledge the easy conquerors of French and German give a willing aid. The modern languages, admitted to the schools with all the honours, have completely failed to attract, and Ollendorf and his friends not unnaturally revenge themselves upon Greek. The attack, in truth, is not disinterested, and it will be pushed with all the greater bitterness on that account.

These, then, are combatants: on the one side those who hold that a system is not wholly bad because it has stood the triumphant test of four centuries; on the other side, reformers of all kinds, biologists, and the patterers of foreign tongues. It is the battle of Trojans against Greeks, of moderns against ancients, over again. The method of attack, though directed to the same point, is somewhat more cunning than usual. Congregation was asked to accept the resolution that "candidates shall not be required to offer both Greek and Latin in the examination in stated subjects in Responsions." A profounder respect for Greek might, perhaps, have enabled the gentleman who drafted this resolution to control its wanton orgie of prepositions. But though its expression be faulty its meaning is clear. If the apostles of progress have their way, Greek will no longer be a necessary part of the university's curriculum. Abolished from Responsions, it will be abolished from the public schools, and it will be studied only by the curious as Hebrew

and Sanskrit are studied to-day. It may possibly be argued that all scholarship is superfluous, that a generation which esteems money above honour, and power above culture, can easily dispense with the humanities. Such an argument might be advanced by the enemies of learning against the exclusiveness of our universities, but it touches the study of Greek no more nearly than the study of chemistry (shall we say?) or of anthropology. In truth, the argument of the Trojans would only be sound if they proved to our satisfaction that Greek was the worst vehicle of instruction yet devised by the mind of man. Of course they have proved nothing of the sort; they have but demonstrated the insincerity of their agitation by gaily contradicting themselves. They complain now that too little Greek is exacted, now that too much. On the one hand we hear the smatterer denounced, on the other the pedant. The gentleman who led the Trojans insidiously deplored "the *minimum* standard." But if it be really the smatterer against whom he is waging war, the standard may easily be raised, and the university restored to its proper function of making scholars. If, again, the Trojan be tilting at pedantry, let him remember that Greek is the pedant's greatest enemy. With the doubtful exception of Aristides, Greece never bred a pedant, and no passage of her splendid literature touches upon small issues or worries the unimportant. No doubt it is necessary for the student to "arrange the defectives in ω

and μ " before he can appreciate the wit of Aristophanes. Yet the human brain is so constructed that it cannot grasp a whole language in a flash. It must perforce master the rudiments before it acquires a deeper understanding, and that which seems drudgery to the man of progress is discipline for the scholar. Nor can these arguments in dispraise of smatterer and pedant be directed only against Greek. Are there no smatterers in Mathematics? And shall we assail this sound branch of learning because the undergraduate can pass Responsions with the most trivial knowledge of Algebra and Euclid? And as for the pedant, he will find food for his outrageous appetite anywhere—even in the Natural Sciences. Is the leg of a frog a better instrument of culture than the text (ill-understood though it be) of a Greek play? Is even a chemical formula safe from him who finds his instruction in trifling dichotomies?

But, say the Trojans, abolish Greek, and scholars will have more time to devote to Latin and other subjects. The argument would be unsound, even if it did not imply that Greek was less estimable than its rivals. "Till Fisher brought Erasmus and Greek and Hebrew to the banks of the Cam," wrote Professor Mayor some years since, "Cambridge had a surfeit of Latin, and what Latin! Terence and Virgil, Cicero and Cæsar, came in with Plato and Sophocles. No, no; the two sister tongues sink or swim

together." And, lest the reformers disqualify the testimony of a professor, let us add the opinion of Dr Warre, a headmaster, who claims to speak by eighteen years' experience, and who finds "that boys who have learnt Greek do as a rule much better in English, French, and mathematics." But an ignorance of Greek need not entail any hardship. There is no law compelling this one or that to go to a university; and to those for whom Greek is as the accursed thing, many colleges are open in the Midlands, Greekless and unashamed.

And what would the reformers put in the place of Greek? A snippet of natural science or a modern language, both subjects open to charges of pedantry and smattering. Are these likely to raise the standard of examination? A little science is the pedant's triumph, and there is nothing which makes for smattering so easily as a modern language. A couple of French books, with a little grammar, may be mastered by the most indolent; and of what profit is their acquisition? They provide no training to the mind; they cannot suggest the beautiful economy of style which shines in every page of Greek; they cannot even equip the student for that baleful fray called "the battle of life." A modern language is useless if it be not learned colloquially; and we shall believe in the sincerity of the Trojans when they make it an essential condition of their reform that no student be permitted to pass in French or German who cannot conduct

his examination, *vivâ voce* or on paper, in the foreign language itself. And not one of them has dared to make so difficult a proposal.

The exclusion of Greek from an elementary examination would not, of course, put an end to the study of a dignified and eloquent language. But the recent resolution was cunningly designed to discourage as widely as possible that which it cannot abolish. If Congregation had not rejected an infamous proposal, Greek would speedily cease to be taught in our schools. The Head Masters of England desire to pass as many boys into the universities as they can with the least trouble, and the reformers in proposing to abolish Greek are merely pandering to the successful schoolmaster, proud of his new methods and his Modern Side. But behind the throne of the schoolmaster there is a greater power still, to which school and university alike cringe in awe—the British Father. Now, the British Father is convinced (quite rightly) that a knowledge of Greek cannot be immediately converted into hard cash; and as he did not learn it himself, he sees no reason why his son should waste his time. And there is no reason. The British Father is right, and he has the remedy in his own hand. He may if he choose refrain from troubling the universities. He may send his son into the City, where he will be secure from the verse of Sophocles, or he may let him learn so much German as will

enable him to buy and sell in a foreign tongue. But our universities are still the arbiters of learning, and it would be a patent disgrace if they renounced their prerogative in favour of one whose only claim is that he holds the money-bags. Oxford and Cambridge have not yet degenerated into practical and profitable boarding-schools. They are richly endowed, and they hold their moneys, not for their own advantage, but for the advantage of learning. It is not for them to "get into line," nor to serve the cause of progress. The universities are more important, as a scholar once said, than those who frequent them; and until it is proved that Greek retards the cause of Humane Letters, those who plead for its abolition are false to their trust. This fury against Greek is not new at Oxford. Nearly four hundred years ago, the battle between the Greeks and Trojans was fought with far greater ferocity than to-day. No self-respecting priest was then permitted to learn the accursed tongue, a knowledge of which was worse than profligacy, drunkenness, or falsehood; but its defence was undertaken at a king's command by Sir Thomas More, whose letters might well be reprinted to-day as a warning against ignorance and folly. In those days Greek was to be sacrificed to Scotist Theology; to-day it is to be thrown as a sop to popular schoolmasters in the cause of Natural Science and Modern Languages; and we are not sure that the Trojans

of old had not a sounder excuse than their descendants.

And in all the arguments no true word is said in dispraise of Greek. It is, therefore, not for us to defend the unassailed and unassailable. But piety might dictate a humbler attitude than that assumed by the Trojans. Whatever is gracious in our life and literature we owe to Greek history and to Greek literature. Could we suppress these influences of the past, we were still in Barbarism. And lest it be said that the exclusion of an elegant study from our universities would not impair its influence, let us quote the opinion of an eminent biologist. "It is in the classics, and in the Greek classics especially," wrote Professor Bateson some ten years since, "that a common man is for once brought into the presence of things which are beautiful and have no use. He will not meet with them again; but it is good that he should see them for a moment. . . . Sooner or later he looks back at these things, and he knows that there is something . . . which is not for him. He is then afraid of that other side of life, and, when power comes to him, he will perhaps not use it to destroy." These are not the words of a classical pedant: they express with admirable eloquence the feeling of one who has devoted his life to the study of science. If all his colleagues were thus humane, how much better for science, how much better for literature!

THE AUTUMN SESSION.

EDUCATION AND FREEDOM OF DEBATE.

SINCE the return of the House of Commons to business, on the 16th of October, the progress of the Education Bill has been the central subject of interest in political circles. But before discussing the desperate party struggles through which it has passed, it will be better to glance at the speech delivered by Mr Balfour at the Guildhall banquet on Monday, November 10, as a fitting introduction to what follows. The statesman-like qualities displayed in it, and the record of what the country owes to the present Administration, are the best answer to those Conservative malcontents who have shown a disposition, if they cannot have their own way, to wreck the Education Bill, even at the cost of destroying the Government. It has seldom fallen to the lot of any Prime Minister on a similar occasion to have a tale to tell so full of matter for congratulation, and so nearly destitute of anything calculated to qualify it. Even the retirement of Lord Salisbury, and the absence of his well-known figure from its accustomed place, though it claimed and received its tribute of regret, was an event too long expected and too much in the course of nature to impair the general effect of the Prime Minister's address: while, mingled with the momentary feeling which the mention of his name was calculated to evoke, was the con-

sciousness that his mantle had fallen on a successor in every way worthy of him: competent to hand down unimpaired the noble traditions which the great Tory statesman had inherited, and to maintain unbroken the continuity of his policy. The re-establishment of peace after an arduous but triumphant struggle, which has brought many benefits in its train besides the security of our Empire; the King's coronation, and his Majesty's recovery from a severe and dangerous illness; the Chinese Treaty; the Japanese alliance; the visit of the Colonial Premiers to this country, and the Colonial conference so skilfully conducted by Mr Chamberlain,—are enough of themselves to constitute 1902 a memorable year in our annals, without any seasoning of domestic politics, which at the Lord Mayor's table are a forbidden topic.

Mr Balfour does not under-rate the difficulties which await us in the settlement of South Africa. They are both moral and material. We have to rebuild "industrial society" from its foundations. We have to unite in cordial co-operation with ourselves a people with whom but now we were engaged in mortal conflict. Nor is it to be expected that all traces of the angry passions thus excited should disappear in a moment. Yet Mr Balfour

believes the task will be accomplished in a comparatively short space of time, and that when it is done these colonies will find themselves in a higher state of material prosperity than they ever enjoyed before. He relies on "the long-tried genius and splendid administrative ability of Lord Milner." But he hopes quite as much from the mission of Mr Chamberlain and the results of personal intercourse with Colonial leaders and Colonial society so happily commenced in England, and now, we may hope, to be widely extended in South Africa.

If Mr Chamberlain creates a precedent, and the interchange of visits between British and Colonial Ministers develops into a custom, we may fairly anticipate from it all that Mr Balfour suggests. It should pave the way for that closer political connection between the Colonies and the mother country for which events are not ripe at present, but which the Prime Minister permits himself to believe may be in store for our children. Other good fruits of the war we have already reaped. We know now that the English people are what they ever were, ready and willing as of yore to fight for their Empire and make all necessary sacrifices to maintain or to augment its glories. We know now that our Colonial fellow-subjects are as proud of our imperial greatness as we are ourselves, and that we can trust them in the hour of danger to do all that loyalty and patriotism can demand to preserve it from injury. Questions as to

whether we could confidently rely on such sentiments either at home or abroad were occasionally asked before the war began. They will never be asked again.

Shall we then overthrow a Government to whom we owe so much, because on one particular point it can give way to neither of the two extreme parties which press upon its flanks? Shall we reject a Bill which places denominational schools in a better position than they have ever occupied before, if it does not indeed save them from absolute extinction, simply because it falls short of ideal perfection? Shall we do this at the risk of restoring to power men who have learned nothing and forgotten nothing; who would bring back with them Home Rule, the reign of the Little Englanders, the thralldom of labour, the crusade against property, the disestablishment of the Church, the banishment of religion from education, and the destruction of all such securities as we still possess for the integrity of the constitution and the protection which it affords us against premature legislation or sudden gusts of popular passion.

Let all such remember Mr Chamberlain's warning addressed to the Liberal Unionist Conference at Birmingham on the 9th of October. If you complain of the Government Bill that it is reactionary, we can show that it is not so. If what you desire is the total abolition of denominational schools, that is an entirely new departure, a step that was never dreamed of in 1870,

what no Radical Government had ever dared to suggest, and to which no Liberal Unionists were ever pledged :—

“Will it not be better that we should agree to differ on such a point as this rather than do anything that would assist the intrigues of those who, if they were successful, would hand over Ireland to the Home Rulers, would transfer the settlement of the great and important problems arising in South Africa—the war in which we have been engaged—to the discretion and the patriotism of the Pro-Boers, would leave our interests in the hands of the Little Englanders, who would depend for our reforms upon the framers of the Newcastle programme?”

This was Mr Chamberlain's warning to his fellow-Liberals. It is just the same as Dr Ingram's warning to his fellow-churchmen.

It should here be observed that none of the leading Opposition speakers ever face the question that is naturally suggested by Mr Chamberlain's speech, though it has been asked over and over again by the supporters of the Bill: and that is, if the voluntary schools are swept away what is to take their place? Something would have to be done. The three millions of children now educated in these schools could not be simply turned adrift. There would be only one way of providing for them, and that would necessitate a large additional education rate, falling with crushing severity on the already overburdened ratepayer. The Radical orators, whom we have already named, the more they look at this aspect of the question the less they like it. If ever they approach it, they back away from it again

directly. Blinking this particular point, Sir W. Harcourt, in his speech at Monmouth, referred to the sum expended by churchmen in supplying and maintaining denominational schools—a sum variously estimated at from fifteen to twenty-five millions. This, he contends, gives the clergy no right to control the religious education of the children. Non-religious education, he says, is their birthright, which cannot be bought “for a mess of pottage.” But what have the parents who gave them birth got to say to this? They have hitherto eaten their pottage with a clear conscience, quite unaware that they were robbing their children of a privilege which they had never heard of, and which, now that they do hear of it, they distinctly repudiate. The vast majority of British parents would reply that, if anything, religious education was the birthright of their children; and they will not sell that, Sir William may assure himself, for any kind of mess that he may offer them.

Our Nonconformist friends may here be reminded of what would probably be their fate if Mr Asquith's “sacred principle” of no religion were to be finally triumphant. The people of this country would still demand religious education for their children, and the Church is the only community rich enough to meet the demand, relieved of course from the costly requirements of the Board of Education. In this case, all religious education would practically fall into the hands of the Church, and those Dissenters who had

fought against the present Bill would find they had made a very bad bargain for themselves.

We do not propose to drag our readers through the whole of the debates which have occupied the House of Commons during the last six weeks, or to notice any but the salient points in the Education Bill, which have been, and still are, the main causes of strife between the Government and the Opposition. The first contention on the part of the Opposition was, that no public money ought to be given in support of any religious teaching peculiar to any one religious community. Failing the success of this demand, the attempt was made to rob denominational schools as far as possible of their denominational character, first, by transferring the appointment and dismissal of teachers from the managers to the local authority; and secondly, by demanding that the denominational managers and the non-denominational managers should be equal in numbers, instead of the latter being one-third to two-thirds, and by various other contentions with the same object in view. Mr Balfour, however, showed so firm a resolve to maintain the integrity of the voluntary schools and the reality of religious teaching, that the attack began to slacken, till a fresh impetus to it was given from the Ministerial side of the House by the amendment of Mr Kenyon-Slaney, who moved to insert before sub-section (e) a new sub-section providing that

“Religious instruction shall be given in a school not provided by the local authority, in accordance with the tenor of the trust-deed relating thereto, and shall be under the control of the managers.” The acceptance of this amendment by the Government caused some surprise and perplexity to many of their supporters. It had been understood all along that while the control of secular education was to be vested in the managers, the control of religious education would be left, as it always had been, in the hands of the clergyman; or at all events, that the right of supervision would be confined to those members of the management who were of the same communion. At first sight, therefore, the amendment appeared to be a distinct violation of the principle on which churchmen had hitherto relied, and a repudiation of the compact on the strength of which they had given their support to the Bill. Nor were the reasons given in defence of it such as to mitigate the grievance it involved. They were told that some power of interference must be lodged with the managers as a security against the abuse of his authority by the clergyman, who might be inoculating the children with doctrines not sanctioned by the Church of England. Even so, we scarcely see why the four denominational managers should not be a sufficient safeguard, especially as they would be far more likely to influence the clergyman without coming to an open rupture, than if their remonstrances were ad-

dressed to him in the name of all six. But considering, as would be admitted by all parties, how very few such cases are likely to occur, it seemed hard to the clergy that the innocent should be made to suffer for the guilty, and that so marked a slight should be cast upon the whole body for the errors of a few individuals. This, however, seems to be a law of nature operating in all directions, and if the clergy have ultimately to submit to it, they must console themselves with this reflection. It is the ultra-Ritualists who will have brought this evil on the Church, and it is these alone that she will have to thank for it should it turn out to be all that the amendment taken by itself would necessarily imply. But we hope it may be otherwise, and that it will be found in practice less mischievous than it appears on paper.

In the first place, we have to consider the case of those schools whose trust-deeds require that the religious teaching shall be in the hands of the parish clergyman. As the Kenyon-Slaney clause stands at present, these schools will be untouched by it. The trust-deeds are to be strictly observed. Schools which possess no trust-deeds are invited to frame them in accordance with model forms supplied by the Board of Education. And it seems to us that if these are adopted the amendment can do little substantial injury to religious teaching, though the form may still be resented by the moderate party in the Church, who are quite unconscious of having

done anything to deserve interference. In the model trust-deed which has been reproduced for Church of England schools, it is provided

"that the 'principal officiating minister' of the parish or district 'shall have the superintendence of the religious and moral instruction of the scholars, with the assistance of a committee, and may use the premises for the purposes of a Sunday-school, under his exclusive control and management.' The committee, of which the minister is to be a member as a matter of course, with power to nominate his curate or curates, is to consist of persons elected by the annual subscribers of ten shillings or more. Power may also be taken to make the churchwardens (being members of the Church of England) *ex-officio* members. No lay member may act until he has subscribed a declaration, either that he is a member of the Church of England, or that he has been for the last three years a communicant of the Church, whichever formula may be adopted when the deed is settled. Nor may any master or mistress continue in office without being a member of that communion."

In the case of any difference between the clergyman and the committee of management, the appeal is to be to the bishop of the diocese. His award is to be final, and the committee or clergyman are bound to give effect to it at once. These conditions seem to comply with all that the Bishop of London recommended in his speech from the Albert Hall. No Dissenters now can be appointed managers; and the bishop is decidedly the fittest authority to arbitrate between them and the clergyman should any occasion for an appeal to him unfortunately arise. The trust-deed reissued at the present moment by a Govern-

ment Department as a model for the Church schools who have to provide themselves with this security within the next three months is of course one that will not be inconsistent with the Government measure. The words of Mr Balfour's new clause, carried on the 20th of November, must therefore be really the light of this document. Without it there might be some doubt as to their exact meaning. With it there can be none. Trust-deeds drawn in conformity with the one now supplied for the guidance of managers will be held to satisfy the requirements of the Bill. And as they are in agreement with the Bishop of London's suggestions, we hope the clergy will have little to complain of in its practical operation.

The disgraceful tactics pursued by the Opposition in order to defeat the Bill, excusable only on the score of desperation, left Mr Balfour no alternative but recourse to those powers with which Government has been invested by the House of Commons for its own protection. To the firmness and moral courage displayed by the Prime Minister in the discharge of this unwelcome duty all the friends of constitutional principles are deeply indebted. To have shrunk from it indeed would have been treason to parliamentary government. Had the methods adopted with the full sanction and approval of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and largely aided by his own personal exertions, been allowed any measure of success, compelling the Government

either to withdraw the Bill or to sacrifice its essential objects, a precedent would have been created pregnant with disastrous results to our existing political order. On the 24th of October Mr Balfour addressed to the House of Commons what the leader of the Opposition pleasantly called "an allocution" by way of showing his contempt for the unpalatable truths expressed in it. On a motion to report progress, after a debate characterised by the usual Radical manoeuvres, Mr Balfour said, "I confess I think that the mode in which the opposition to this Bill is conducted is one which, if persisted in as regards this and other measures, would make all parliamentary government impossible." Something more was at stake, he said, than the mere carrying into law of this particular measure. "I ask hon. gentlemen to consider that a Parliament which is stopped by mere time, mere length of debate, mere multiplication of amendments, from passing a Bill of this importance confesses its own impotence, and I do not think it is in the interest of either side of the House that our impotence should be admitted." These words, addressed by the first Minister of the Crown to the representative assembly, cannot be regarded lightly, especially when we remember that the gentlemen complained of are in close alliance with a party whose avowed object it is to render Parliament contemptible.

Only a few days before Mr Balfour's appeal we had a most amusing illustration of

the kind of understanding which exists between the two parties,—we suppose we must not call either of them “sections” nor yet “fractions.” Mr O’Brien had asked the Government to give a day for the discussion of the Crimes Act, which of course was to be virtually a vote of censure on the Government. Mr Balfour could not give a day unless it was demanded by the Opposition as a whole, and not by a section of it. The Irish members then indignantly denied that they were a “section,” being entitled to a hearing as the representatives of a separate nation. They declined to be regarded as a part only of the Imperial Parliament. In this contention they were supported by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who urged that they had a right to what they asked for on the grounds which they themselves advanced. But he would not do more than beg the Government to accede to the request of his Irish friends. Willing to wound and yet afraid to strike, Sir Henry was too wary to commit himself to a general engagement, which would only bring out into bold relief the weakness of his own party and the strength of the Government. His conduct on this occasion reminds us in some respects of Glossin’s behaviour in the justice-room, when Dirk Hatterick, his secret accomplice, was brought up before the magistrates to answer a charge of murder. Glossin, himself a magistrate, and not yet detected, said to his brother justices, “Is it right to keep this

poor man so heavily ironed?” This was throwing out a friendly signal to the prisoner. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, joining with the Irish members in decrying the operation of the Crimes Act, and the imprisonment of Irish offenders, was doing much the same thing.

These things considered, the attitude of the Opposition towards the Education Bill becomes doubly serious. When the Irish members make their next contemptible attack on the dignity and authority of the House of Commons, they will lack no backing from Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. And no doubt some such reflections as these were present to Mr Balfour’s mind when he moved his closure resolutions on the 11th of last month. It will be noted that in his appeal to the Opposition on the 24th October, he alluded to “other measures,” and to “persistence” in this style of warfare. He clearly has an eye to the future as well as to the present: and if he will only go on as he has begun, and set himself vigorously to work to crush the monstrous abuse which is eating into the vitals of the constitution—were this the only thing he had to show for five years of office—he would be entitled to the gratitude of posterity.

“Freedom of debate” is such a good cry, so plausible and so popular, as to deceive even the elect—to wit, the little group of self-righteous Conservatives who opposed the resolutions. The truth about it, therefore, requires to be constantly repeated—hammered, we may

say, into the public mind. Freedom of debate never meant, till quite lately, freedom of talk, the right of every man to occupy the time of the House as long as he likes, while he is only repeating what has been already said many times over. Freedom of debate meant freedom of argument; and when that had been exhausted the bell rang. Of course there would be occasions when it meant something different—liberty to protest, to inquire, or to bring some transaction before the notice of the House. But it never meant talk for talking's sake, or big speeches on little amendments, out of all proportion to their importance. If this is what freedom of debate is understood to mean now, it is a new development which demands new regulations. As matters stand, those who pose as its champions are its worst enemies. It is the obstructionists themselves who prevent legitimate freedom of debate by pushing mere loquacity to such lengths that there is no room for it. The outcry against the closure is in these circumstances ridiculous. It is as though a man should block up the stream above his neighbour's mill to prevent the wheel from being turned, and then when he removes the obstacle, should charge him with oppression. That the stream of debate may flow freely, and the legislative wheel be kept in motion, it is absolutely necessary that this abuse should be not scotched but killed; and that can only be done by persevering in the course which Mr Balfour has now adopted,

bringing home to the offenders that their weapons are useless, and to the public that they are not only unconstitutional, but fraught with real danger to the liberties we have so long enjoyed. When Parliament became impotent we should be on the verge of anarchy, and when anarchy set in we should be on the verge of despotism.

It may seem to some people childish to hint at such things in this twentieth century. But why should England be an exception to what history proclaims to be an almost universal law? Who are we that we should escape the common lot?

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and those who are with him should think a little more than they do of the heavy responsibility which rests upon them in thus straining the capacities of representative government to almost bursting-point. All parties alike are, or should be, its trustees; all statesmen are bound in a special manner to protect its interests; and to renounce or neglect these obligations in pursuit of some petty party triumph, a man must be equally destitute both of patriotic feeling and political intelligence. Still harsher if possible is the censure to which he exposes himself who employs as his instruments the professed enemies of the constitution, and hounds on others to do what he is afraid to do himself.

The Opposition brought upon themselves the resolutions moved by Mr Balfour on the 11th of November, and the debate of that night will hereafter form a landmark in the history of

parliamentary procedure. Mr Balfour repeated what he said on a former occasion, to which we have already referred. He begged the House to detach their minds from the particular measure now before it, and to take a general view of the question with regard to future legislation, as well as to the probability that the present Opposition might one day be sitting on the Speaker's right and the present Ministry on his left. Mr Balfour was acting for the interests of Parliament as a whole, and not for the benefit of any one party. Of course he is aware that the closure is a two-edged weapon, which may one day be turned against Conservatives. But he sets parliamentary efficiency in general above all party considerations, and should it ever be necessary to the one to sacrifice the other, he will esteem it the lesser evil of the two. But he did not think that, even if so unfortunate an event should happen, his own resolutions could be answerable for it. The Radicals had precedents of their own to which they could appeal with much greater force. They had closed by compartments even more important measures than the Education Bill, after much shorter discussion, and against a much more numerous Opposition. The Home Rule Bill, the Crimes Bill, and the Evicted Tenants Bill would supply them with all they wanted.

Mr Balfour readily acknowledged the courtesy and the moderation of tone which had marked the Opposition; but none the less had they suc-

ceeded, perhaps all the more because of it, in arresting the progress of the Education Bill to such an extent that "after thirty-eight days in Committee," spent chiefly upon only four or five clauses, the House was still far from the conclusion of the stage. It matters nothing by what name we distinguish the process by which this result has been produced. There is that open and undisguised form of obstruction which consists in repeated motions for adjournment or for reporting progress or what not; and there is the more insidious form which consists in the multiplication of amendments, and the prolongation of speeches which every one knows are not expected to have the slightest effect upon the Bill itself except that of talking it out. This is the kind of obstruction to which Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's party have devoted themselves, avowing, as the 'Times' said in a leading article on this debate, "an attempt to kill the Bill by prolonging debate beyond all recorded examples." And to this attempt their leader gave all the moral support in his power, and, notwithstanding the generous language of Mr Balfour, a good deal of his personal support too.

Mr Chamberlain spoke on the subject of obstruction very much in the spirit of our own remarks, asserting that if it had not been exercised under one name it had under another, and indeed the facts speak for themselves. The time taken in Committee must have been spent on something more than

legitimate debate. We have said nothing of the Liberal trick early in November, by which the Opposition sought to entrap the Government into a minority. But, taken altogether, the whole course of action pursued by that side of the House since the middle of October has been of such a character as fully to justify Mr Balfour in promptly putting an end to it. He himself was making a conciliatory speech, and anxious, of course, to avoid using "harsh words." But Mr Chamberlain was not so nice: if this, said he, was not obstruction, he would be glad to know what was.

While the House of Commons has been thus occupied Lord Rosebery has been flitting about the political stage, for the purpose, we suppose, of keeping himself in evidence as the possible head of a fresh combination. Liberals, however, do not seem inclined to take him at his own valuation. They are rather inclined to say it is best to be off with the old love before you are on with the new. In his address at Edinburgh, his lordship professed to see the dawn of a new Liberal party unencumbered with a Liberal policy *parmaque inglorius alba*. The dawn, we think, must still be on the misty mountain-tops, scarcely visible through the fog to any ordinary observer. The Oxford undergraduates may perhaps be able to see through Lord Rosebery's spectacles, as he addressed them very confidentially indeed on the 4th of November, when all

present were sworn to secrecy, the oath being taken on a clean slate carefully washed for the occasion. What mysterious communications he may have had to make to the rising generation which must not be divulged to their seniors we cannot undertake to say. Oxford, however, has been called the home of lost causes; and if she followed Lord Rosebery's lead she would add one more to the number.

In spite of Lord Rosebery, in spite of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, in spite of Radicals and Ritualists, in spite of sinister auguries and prophecies of disaster, the Bill has passed through Committee, and will probably become law without any material alteration. It may not be exactly what even moderate churchmen could have desired. They may feel hurt by some of its provisions. But they must consider that if denominational schools were to be saved from a lingering death by State assistance, some little sacrifice was necessary. To attempt to wreck a Bill of this description because it is partially a compromise, would be as much opposed to the Church's best interests as it would be to plain common-sense. We are happy to think that no such attempt is seriously contemplated, as, although it would certainly fail, it would be attributed to passions discreditable to any party, but especially to one which claims to be in a particular manner the supporter and exponent of a great religious principle.

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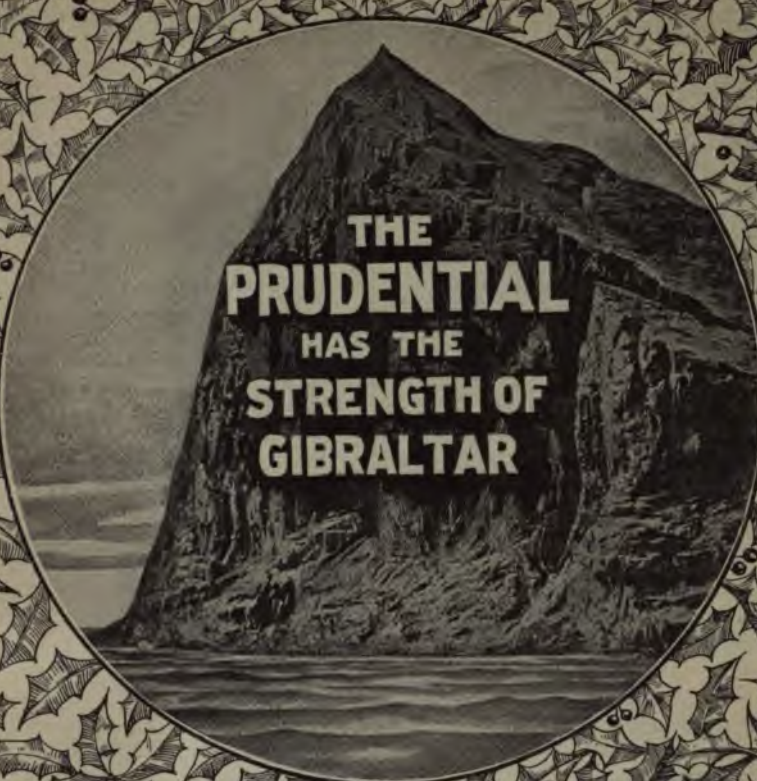
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